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COMMENTARY

ON

THE GOSPELS

INTENDED FOR POPULAR USE

BY D. D. WHEDON, D.D.

MATTHEW—MARK

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THE AUTHOR

Dr. Daniel D. Whedon was one of the outstanding leaders in the Methodist Episcopal Church during the last half of the nineteenth century. His outstanding official contribution to Methodism was in the capacity of editor of the *Methodist Quarterly Review* from 1856 to 1884, just a few months prior to his death. To serve in the capacity of editor of one of the outstanding Methodist publications for almost 30 years gave him an unprecedented and powerful influence upon Methodism of that period. During that time, or just following it, there were several Methodist writers who produced volumes on theology. Among them are John Miley, Amos Binney, Thomas Ralston, and Olin Curtis. Nearly every student of Wesleyan theology will be acquainted with all or most of these names even to this day. But it is claimed by one student of Methodist theology that Daniel Whedon was the most important theological figure of the last half of the century, and that all of the writers of formal theological works named above, were to some extent in debt to him.

In addition to his editorial work, his profound influence on theology was due to his publication in 1864 of a book on the *Freedom of the Will*. This was an able defense of the Arminian point of view on this controversial subject and it had a great influence on the Methodist writers of the following years. Through this book and other writings he also contributed to the governmental view of the atonement, which we associate particularly with the theologian, John Miley.

Of course his *Commentary* also added to his influence on the stream of Wesleyan thought of his own and subsequent years. For clear and consistent teaching on the Arminian position with regard to the question of predestination, we refer the reader to his treatment of Romans 8.29, 30 and Ephesians 1.4. Chapters 9, 10 and 11 of Romans have often been used to teach an unconditional predestination. We recommend the very lucid and consistent treatment given this passage in Whedon's *Commentary*.

Another important illustration of Whedon's treatment of Bible passages is his development of the first chapter of I John. This chapter has been often used to defend the necessity of sin even in the believer, but Whedon shows clearly its relation to the Gnostic heresies of John's day and sets in clear light its true teaching.

These are but samples of the strong Arminian emphasis combined with sound exegesis which you will find in this Commentary.

THE COMMENTARY

Whedon's Commentary was not produced all at one time. It was produced as a series over a period of years, with the volume on Matthew and Mark appearing in 1860, Luke and John in 1866, Acts and Romans in 1871, the Pauline Epistles from Corinthians through Timothy in 1875 and the final volume of the New Testament in 1880. Whedon himself wrote all of the material on the New Testament except for two brief

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sections written by his nephew D. A. Whedon. These sections were the comments and Introduction on Philippians and Colossians and on I Peter and most of II Peter.

The nine volumes of the Old Testament were planned by Whedon but he did not write any of that part of the set. The work was hampered by the death of some of the men chosen to write certain parts of it, so that there had to be quite extensive re-assigning of authors for the various parts. Only four volumes had appeared by the time of the editor's death, and this did not include the first books of the Old Testament but rather the section extending from Joshua through the Song of Solomon. The volume on Isaiah, Jeremiah and Lamentations appeared just after Whedon's death, and the remaining volumes in subsequent years down to 1901.

Partly as a consequence of the delay in publication of the volumes of the Old Testament, we find a wide variation in the value and usefulness of that part of the *Commentary*. The authors vary from men with strong holiness viewpoint such as Daniel Steele, who wrote the comments on the books of Leviticus, Numbers and Joshua, and the excellent commentary on the Psalms by Hibbard, to men with a liberal tendency like Milton S. Terry who wrote the volumes on Genesis and Exodus, and on Kings and the books following through Esther, as well as a part of Vol. 3 dealing with the two books of Samuel, and to at least one author with pronounced liberal views such as the author of the commentary on Daniel. The result is that the *Commentary* on the Old Testament is of very unequal value, some of it being quite outstanding, while other parts must be used with care. This is in marked contrast to the 5 volumes of the New Testament *Commentary* which were written by Whedon himself with the few exceptions noted in an earlier paragraph. These exceptions do not impair the value of the New Testament section of this great work.

WHEDON'S POSITION ON THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS

Some question has been raised as to the position of Daniel Whedon on the subject of entire sanctification. John L. Peters in his book *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* has recorded the fact that Whedon opposed the organization of special holiness agencies which took place in the later years of the nineteenth century and therefore during the later years of Whedon's own life. He felt that the subject of holiness should not become a subject of specialization, but rather an integral part of the total ministry of the Church. According to Peters, Whedon also took the position that one is sanctified at the time of justification. This is the Zinsendorfian position which Wesley had so much trouble with in his day. Peters quotes from Whedon to substantiate his argument, but a careful study of the following references and comments indicates that Peters did not interpret Whedon properly.

1. He discusses the question of pentecostal sanctification. See notes on Matt. 5.8 and Acts 2.4.

2. He gives a defense of Christian perfection. Matt. 5.48.

3. Sanctification is defined as heart purity (Matt. 5.8) and as perfect love. (Matt. 5.48).

4. This experience is available in this life. (I Thess. 5.23)

5. In several ways it is shown to be something more than what is received at justification. It requires a more powerful faith than at justification (I Thess. 5.23). It is called a deeper change (Jas. 4.8). Carnal Christians like those at Corinth need a higher level of holiness (I Cor. 3.1)

6. The same idea is enforced by his speaking of "sin in believers" (I Cor. 3.1). This is using the terminology of Wesley, and although he may not use the term in the same sense that Wesley meant, he does use it as an argument for holiness. (I Cor. 3.1)

7. A distinction is made between the partial sanctification which takes place at justification and entire santification which takes place later. (Matt. 5.8 and I Jn. 1.7)

8. A clear distinction is made between sin and infirmities. See notes on Jas. 3.2, on Matt. 5.8 and on Matt. 5.48.

9. In his comments on 2 Cor. 7.1 Whedon gives the following summary of teaching with regard to this important subject.

> "On this passage we may note that a perfected holiness is here represented as a possible attainment; that it is the result of a properly directed activity, and that its attainment is not to be delayed until death, but is to be realized and possessed during the Christian's life." (Comment on 2 Cor. 7.1)

This is certainly a clear presentation of entire sanctification as a presently attainable blessing. It might be worthy of note that the "properly directed activity" to which he makes reference is his analysis of the scriptural words "cleanse ourselves...perfecting holiness."

One other item should perhaps be called to the reader's attention. Whedon gives an excellent argument to support the scripture, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." (I Jn. 3.9) Yet he does seem to make an allowance for an exception in comments on I Jn. 5.18. While this would not affect his teaching on the subject of holiness, it would be one of those passages to which we would take some exception to his exegesis. Such an exception is no more than we can expect in most commentaries.

We have tried to direct the reader's attention to the strong points in Whedon's *Commentary on the New Testament* and the reasons why we welcome its re-publication, while at the same time, we note that there are isolated passages which are disappointing.

Of course there is no commentary that will be satisfactory to all readers in every respect, and this one is no exception. Every Bible student has suffered the disappointment of going to a commentary for an explanation of some point, only to find that the commentary had nothing to say on the subject being sought. All commentaries share this trait, and this one is no

different in that respect. Beyond this commonly recognized lack, every commentary will also prove disappointing in other ways. Its comments follow a different vein of thought than that sought by the student. It may even be that some comments will seem to be incorrect. Every commentary shares these defects, in greater or lesser degree. In spite of these limitations inherent in the nature of a commentary, we commend Whedon to every serious student of God's Word, and we believe they will find it of great value.

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INTRODUCTION.

The word Testament is a term for any document which is *attested* by seal or otherwise. Such documents, in law, are a Will bequeathing property, or a Covenant embodying a solemn treaty or contract. It is in this latter sense that the word is biblically used. The Old Testament embraces the covenant between God and his people, expressing the terms of service and favour under the old dispensation; the New Testament embodies a similar covenant under the later dispensation of his Son. Both Testaments constitute what (from the Greek *ὁ βιβλος*, the book) is pre-eminently styled The Bible.

The New Testament is that body of twenty-seven books, or treatises, written by eight different authors, which the Christian Church from the apostolic age has considered as providentially designed by Jesus Christ, the Great Head of the Church, as the true, and perfect, and infallible expression and record of his religion. The authenticity of these books, their historical truth, and the verity of the religion they teach, have been demonstrated with great learning and force, and at great length, by many able writers. The vast mass of proof we may very imperfectly classify as Historical, Prophetical, and Internal. Of these we briefly notice the first two.

Historical Proof.

The Historical Proof embraces, I. The testimony of profane or pagan authors to the facts of Christianity. 1. Tacitus, the greatest of Roman historians, says, in words which show his own pagan hostility to Christianity, that the emperor Nero "inflicted the severest punishments upon a class of people held in abhorrence for their crimes, called *Christians*. The founder of that name was Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius under his procurator, Pontius Pilate. This destructive superstition, thus checked for a while, broke out again, and spread, not only over Judea, where the evil originated, but through Rome also." This extract furnishes, in fact, a brief history of the origin of Christianity; of the existence, time, and death of its founder, and the early martyrdoms of his Church. 2. Suetonius, another Roman pagan historian, says, in his Life of Nero: "The Christains were punished—a set of men of a new and mischievous superstition." 3. Pliny, one of the most elegant of pagan writers, in a letter to the emperor of Rome about thirty or forty

years after the death of Christ, detailing the persecutions he was inflicting on the Christians of his province, says: "They declared that the whole of their guilt or error was that they were accustomed to meet on a stated day before it was light, and to sing in concert a hymn of praise to Christ as God, and to bind themselves by a sacred obligation, not for the perpetration of any wickedness, but that they would not commit any theft, robbery, or adultery, nor violate their words, nor refuse when called upon to restore anything committed to their trust. After this they were accustomed to separate and then to re-assemble to eat in common a harmless meal." These passages demonstrate, by the highest possible pagan authority, the great facts of the existence, the time, and the death of Christ, as well as of the sufferings, the purity, the stated worship, the belief in Christ's divinity, and the sacramental meal of the early Church.

II. The testimony of pagan controversial opposers. Celsus wrote against Christianity in the second century. He assumes throughout that the four Gospels were written by the authors whose names are attached to them, and that if he can overthrow them he destroys the religion. He does not so much deny the miracles of Jesus as ascribe them (like the scribes) to magic and connection with evil powers. Porphyry in the third century, and the emperor Julian in the fourth, follow the same course. The authenticity of the Gospels is by them wholly admitted.

III. Higher than all pagan admission is the testimony of the early Christian Church. That the primitive Christians were a holy Church, sifted by the terrible power of martyrdom, is attested alike by pagan statements, by Christian record, and by the wonderful and solemn disclosures of the catacombs, whose sepulchral inscriptions bear register of the immense numbers of the martyr army. Of the truth of the Christian history these were the witnesses, such witnesses as no other history ever claimed.

A whole body of Christian writers exists, extending from the present day to the time of Paul and the evangelists. A whole mass of books and records lies along from the present commentary to Matthew himself. Each successive generation quotes the books of the preceding generation entirely up to the New Testament writers. Each generation proves the existence of the writings of the previous generation by quotations; for nobody can quote books that do not exist. All these generations quote the books of the New Testament; and each generation quotes the preceding generation as quoting the New Testament. The New Testament books could not then have been forged or written at any point subsequent to the time of the writers whose name they bear. And that is the very time which the pagan Tacitus, and Suetonius, corroborated by Pliny, affirm to have been the time of Christ. In the evangelists and epistles we have, there-

fore, the testimony of contemporaries to the doings and sayings of Christ, and those contemporaneous holy men who died to seal the truth of their narrative.

Prophetic Proof.

Prophetic fulfilments we will treat under two classes, namely, Prophecies shown to be fulfilled by pagan testimony, and Prophecies shown to be fulfilled by the New Testament.

I. Taking the Hebrew Scriptures and the Pagan testimonies above given, (without adducing the New Testament,) we could give a powerful proof from prophecy of the divine character of Christianity. We would leave out of account all prophecy that could be called obscure, (which belongs to the interior doctrines rather than to the external proofs,) and take those which are unequivocal and clear.

1. Tacitus, Suetonius, and Josephus agree that the time of Christ was the period when, according to the Sacred Books, the advent was generally expected. So clear was prophecy as to the time, that the age was looking for its fulfilment.

2. The celebrated prophecy (Gen. xlix, 3, 10) predicted that Shiloh should come before the sceptre should depart from Judah; and all the ancient Jewish writers agreed that Shiloh was Messiah, that is, Christ. The sceptre has departed, and Messiah has therefore come; and he came so early as the time at which Tacitus, etc., affirm that Jesus came; and the Jews admit he never came before.

3. Daniel (ix, 25) prophesies (in Persia during the captivity, when Jerusalem was in ruins) that "from the going forth of the command" of the Persian king "to restore and build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah, the Prince, shall be" 7+60+2, equal to sixty-nine weeks. These weeks, it is on all hands admitted, are year-weeks, of which each day is a year. Certainly no Jew can claim them to be day-weeks, for Messiah did not come in sixty-nine ordinary weeks. But the extent of the period from the time of the restoration of Jerusalem to the time assigned by Tacitus, etc., to Christ, (leaving to learned men to prove the exactitude of the fit,) we may affirm, upon the face of it, to agree with the requirements of the prophecy. But Daniel goes on to say that the Messiah "shall be cut off;" of which Tacitus states, as exact fulfilment, that "Christ suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate."

II. In taking up prophecies whose fulfilment appears from the New Testament, we assume that the argument for the veracity of the New Testament writers is conclusive, so far as concerns the main facts they attest. Leaving out all reference to miraculous facts, if the evangelists and Paul are reliable for the historical points, like the lineage, birthplace, humble origin, peaceful doctrines, sacrificial death, and diffusion of his religion among the Gentiles, Jesus fulfils the pictures of prophecy. Here note:

1. His lineage from David, making him a hereditary temporal prince. See notes on Matt. i, 21, 1–17.

2. His birthplace, identical with David's birthplace, Bethlehem. See notes on Matt. ii, 1–6.

3. His humble rise, as a branch or sprout. See notes on Matt. iii, 23.

4. His character as a peaceful teacher, yet his doctrines to become the religion of the Gentiles. See notes on Matt. xii, 17–21.

5. The locality of his early ministry, Galilee. See notes on Matt. iv, 12–16.

6. His death: At the passover. See note on Matt. xxvi, 3. As a ransom. Isa. liii, 4–11. See note on Matt. xx, 28.

Of miraculous facts we select the following:

1. Birth from a pure virgin. See notes on Matt. i, 22, 23.

2. Performance of miracles. Consult Isa. xxxv, 4–6, and xxix, 18. See note on Matt. xi, 4, 5.

3. His resurrection from the dead. Isa. liii, 12.

4. His rule over the nations. Isa. xi, 4–10; Isa. ii, 1–4; Psa. ii, 8.

Finally, with the full recollection that the Old Testament claimed to be prophetic, and to foretell the future Messiah, read the passage of Isaiah lii, 13—liii, 12, and judge whether it is not a wonderful descriptive outline of the Messiah of the Gospels.

Inspiration of the Scriptures.

If the New Testament writings be true, they are inspired, since they affirm their own inspiration. Rom. iii, 1; 2 Tim. iii, 16; 2 Pet. i, 21; John xxiv, 49; xiv, 16–26; Matt. x, 19, 20, (see note.) 1. That the Scriptures are an infallible expression of the religion of Jesus is necessarily true. For how absurd would it be for Jesus to pass through the terrible labour and suffering of bringing his religion into existence, and then to leave it in no definite, certain, intelligible, and permanent shape. 2. The Scriptures were accepted as inspired by the Primitive Church in its inspired and martyr age, before the last apostle had deceased, and while miracle and the discerning of spirits were still existing in the Church. 3. Without at the present time discussing the nature of inspiration; without deciding whether it was by the divine *selection* of every word, and giving it to the mind and pen of the writer; or by *guarding* him from every error in Christian truth and doctrine, or even in historical, natural, or chronological fact; or whether it was by *elevation*, filling the mind with the spirit and the clear perception of Christian truth; thus much is certain: that the New Testament is accepted and sanctioned by the inspired Church; by Jesus, the Head of the Church; and by God in his providence, as the true and ultimate expression and record of religious truth and doctrine.

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.

ITS AUTHOR.

MATTHEW the evangelist and apostle was a Galilean, and the son of Alpheus. If his father was the same with the Alpheus named as the father of James the Less, then he was cousin of the Lord Jesus. His name of Matthew, signifying, probably, *Gift of God*, seems to have been a new, regenerate name, substituted for his birth-name Levi, like Peter for Simon, and Paul for Saul.

Matthew's residence was at Capernaum, and he was by profession a publican. The Lake of Gennesaret, by which he lived, however deserted now, was then surrounded with an immense population; it was embosomed in the fertile Jordan valley; its fisheries supplied a source of livelihood, and its surface was alive with a busy navigation and traffic. It was the great thoroughfare for the commerce of Damascus and Babylon with Southern Palestine. A custom-house, for the collection of duties upon the commodities of this traffic, was located by the Roman government at Capernaum, and Matthew was there a tax collector. The publicans proper were usually Romans of rank and wealth, who farmed or let out the business of collecting to resident deputies, who were called portitors. It was to this last class that Matthew belonged. A competence, if not wealth, was likely to be gained by this office; but, as the officer thereby became an agent of the Roman government, he encountered a great unpopularity with his countrymen.

As Matthew was one day sitting at the receipt of customs by the sea-side Jesus, at an early period of his ministry, passed and pronounced the mandate, "Follow me." That Matthew already knew Jesus, if not his relative, is plain from the instant result. "He arose and followed" his Lord. When, before the sermon on the mount, our Lord inaugurated his body of apostles, Matthew was included; and in his own catalogue stands second in class and eighth in order.

About six months after this first call Matthew gave a great feast in honour of his Lord, to which he invited many of his former publican associates. He gives a brief account of the feast; but we are indebted to Luke for the fact, which Matthew's modesty omitted to mention, that Matthew himself was the giver. The first three evangelists (whose Gospels are called *synoptical*, from the fact of their marked correspondence with each other, in which John's Gospel does not share) mention the sullen murmurs of the scribes and Pharisees at the association of Jesus with publicans and sinners, as well as our Lord's most wise and benevolent replies.

Matthew's name appears in the New Testament for the last time in the catalogue of the eleven in the Acts, and he was doubtless at the feast of Pentecost

The most authentic primitive tradition assures us that he preached the Gospel for some years in Palestine. This accords well with the similar record that the apostles remained and preached in Jerusalem twelve years. *See note on Acts* viii, 1. Later ecclesiastical writers suppose that he preached in Ethiopia, and there suffered martyrdom. But an earlier writer, Heracleon, who lived in the second century, affirmed that Matthew was one of the apostles that did not undergo the martyr's fate.

ITS ORIGIN AND DATE.

The earliest antiquity was unanimous in assigning the present order of the four Gospels as their chronological order of publication, and Matthew's was therefore held to be the earliest. The same antiquity also agrees that Matthew originally wrote it in *Hebrew;* that is, in the *Aramaic* or popular Hebrew, as spoken by the Palestinian Jews of that day. It was therefore doubtless written while the Church was mainly Jewish, in Palestine; and during, or soon after, the twelve years while the Apostles remained in Jerusalem. This accords with the historic statements of Theophylact and others, placing its publication at from eight to fifteen years after the ascension. This early date is not at all contradicted, as is by many supposed, by the passages xxvii, 8, and xxviii, 15, in which the *name* Potter's Field and the Jewish *fable* of the stealing Christ's body by the disciples, are said to be permanent "until this day." Such language does not so much furnish a great distance of time, as make an appeal to the then present existence of this *name* and this *fable* in illustration of the truth of the evangelist's narrative.

But while the Hebrew original of Matthew's Gospel may thus be pronounced unquestionable, critics are clearly agreed that our present copy has all the marks of an original Greek composition. The proofs of originality are too explicit and numerous to be gainsaid. It is, also, quoted by all the earliest writers, without misgiving, as a true authoritative Matthew. The only conclusion left us is that the Greek is a *duplicate*, rather than a translation, and that both are by Matthew.

This Gospel, then, may be fairly considered the most ancient of Christian documents existing. Mr. Lewin, in his Life of St. Paul, maintains with no little plausibility that the Apostle used it and quoted it. Thus, 1 Cor. vii, 10–12, alludes to Matt. xix, 5; and 1 Thess. v, 1, 2, alludes to Matt. xxiv, 36, 43; and 1 Cor. ix, 14, to Matt. x, 7; and 1 Cor. vi, 3, to Matt. xix, 28; and 1 Cor. xiii, 2, to Matt. xvii, 20, and xxi, 21. These passages in the Apostle and the Evangelist undoubtedly refer to the same sayings of Jesus; and unless Paul obtained them through some independent tradition, he must have had this Gospel in hand. The fact that these sayings are given by Matthew alone creates a strong presumption for Mr. Lewin's theory, and throws the burden of proof upon the adverse side. From all these considerations, dissenting from a very general opinion among scholars, we hold the very early publication of Matthew. See our vol. ii, p. 10.

HISTORICAL SYNOPSIS OF THE GOSPELS.

The figures with the mark § in the notes refer to the sections of this Synopsis.

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
	PERIOD FIRST.				
	THE INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD.				
1	Preface of St. Luke	.....	.....	1: 1–4.	.....
2	Preface of St. John	.....	.....	.....	1: 1–18.
3	Annunciation to Elizabeth	.....	.....	1: 5–25.	.....
4	Salutation of Mary	.....	.....	1: 26–38.	.....
5	Visit of Mary to Elizabeth	.....	.....	1: 39–56.	.....
6	Birth of John the Baptist	.....	.....	1: 57–80.	.....
7	An angel appears to Joseph	1: 18–25.	.....	.....	.....
8	Jesus's birth	1: 25.	.....	2: 1–7.	.....
9	Genealogy of Jesus	1: 1–17.	.....	3: 23–38.	.....
10	Appearance of an angel to the shepherds; their visit to Jesus	.....	.....	2: 8–20.	.....
11	Circumcision of Jesus	1: 25.	.....	2: 21.	.....
12	Jesus presented in the temple.	.....	.....	2: 22–38.	.....
13	The Magi. Flight of Jesus into Egypt. Cruelty of Herod. Return of Jesus from Egypt.	2: 1–23.	.....	2: 39.	.....
14	Jesus goes to the Passover at twelve years of age	.....	.....	2: 40–52.	.....
	PERIOD SECOND.				
	THE QUALIFICATION.				
15	John the Baptist and his ministry	3: 1–12.	1: 1–8.	[1–18 1: 80; 3:	.....
16	Jesus is baptized	3: 13–17.	1: 9–11.	3: 21–23.	.....
17	Jesus's temptation	4: 1–11.	1: 12, 13.	4: 1–13.	.....
18	John the Baptist's testimony to Jesus; its effects	.....	.....	.....	1: 19–52.
	PERIOD THIRD.				
	THE PREPARATORY MINISTRY.				
19	Marriage Feast at Cana, of Galilee	.....	.....	.....	2: 1–12.
	First Passover of Jesus's Ministry.				
20	Jesus goes to Jerusalem, at the Passover; he casts the traders out of the temple	... .	.....	.....	2 13–25.

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
21	Jesus's discourse with Nicodemus	.....	.....	.....	3: 1–21.
22	Jesus, leaving Jerusalem, baptizes in rural Judea. John's last great testimony to Jesus.	.....	.....	3: 18.	3: 22–36.
23	Jesus, after John's imprisonment, retires through Samaria to Galilee. The Samaritan woman and townsmen	4: 12.	1: 14.	4: 14, 15.	4, 1–42.
24	Public ministry of Jesus in Galilee, and healing of nobleman's son	4: 17.	1: 14, 15.	.....	4: 43–54.
25	Jesus goes to Nazareth; preserves his life by a miracle; fixes his dwelling at Capernaum	4: 13–17.	.....	4: 16–32.	.....
26	Call of Simon and Andrew, also of James and John, with the miracle which preceded it	4: 18–22.	1: 16–20.	5: 1–11.	.....
27	Jesus heals a demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum	.....	1: 21–28.	4: 33–37.	.....
28	Peter's wife's mother and others are healed. Attended by some of his disciples, Jesus teaches and works miracles in Galilee	[4:23-25. 8: 14–25.	1: 29–39.	4: 38–44.	.....
29	Jesus heals a leper	8: 2–4.	1: 40–45.	5: 12–15.	.....
30	Jesus heals a paralytic	9: 1–8.	2: 1–12.	5: 17–26.	.....
31	Call of Matthew	9: 9.	2: 13, 14.	5: 27, 28.	.....
	Second Passover.				
32	Healing of an infirm man at Bethesda, in Jerusalem	.....	.....	.....	5: 1–47.
33	Jesus vindicates his disciples for plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath	12: 1–8.	2: 23–28.	6: 1–5.	.....
34	Jesus heals a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, and withdraws himself from the Pharisees, and heals many	12: 9–21.	3: 1–12.	6: 6–11.	.....
	PERIOD FOURTH.				
	THE PLATFORM AND EXTENDING MINISTRY.				
35	Jesus retires to a mountain, and calling his disciples to him, chooses twelve; he is followed by a great multitude, and heals many	10: 2–5.	3: 13–19.	6: 12–19.	.....
36	The Sermon on the Mount	5: 1–7: 27.	.....	6: 20–49.	.....
37	The centurion's servant healed.	8: 5–13.	.....	7: 1–10.	.....
38	The widow's son is raised from the dead at Nain	.....	.....	7: 11–17.	.....

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
39	Jesus's answer to the disciples sent by John the Baptist....	11: 2–19.	.....	7: 18–23	.....
40	Jesus's reflections in consequence of his appeal to his mighty works.....	11:20–30.	.....	7: 24–35.	.....
41	A woman who had been a sinner is publicly reassured by Jesus sitting at meat with a Pharisee	.....	.....	7: 36–50.	.....
42	During Jesus's second circuit through Galilee he heals a demoniac, and the scribes and Pharisees blaspheme the Holy Spirit.....	[22–37. 9: 35; 12:	[30. 6:6; 3:19–	[14–23. 8:1–3; 11:	.....
43	Jesus reproves the scribes and Pharisees for seeking a sign..	12:38–45.	.....	[36. 11:16,24–	.....
44	Who are truly blessed.....	.....	.....	11: 27,28.	.....
45	Attempt to see him. Jesus regards his true disciples as his nearest relations.....	12:46–50.	3: 31–35.	8: 19–21.	.....
46	Jesus, sitting at meat with a Pharisee, denounces woes against the Pharisees, scribes, and teachers of the law.....	.....	.....	11:37–54.	.....
47	Jesus's sermon to the myriads; then admonishes his disciples.	.....	.....	12: 1–59.	.....
48	The calamities of certain Galileans a warning to the Jews..	.....	.....	13: 1–9.	.....
49	Parables. The reason why he used them. One explained...	13: 1–52.	4: 1–34.	8: 4–18.	.....
50	Jesus gives commandment to cross the lake. Incidents on the way. A tempest stilled..	8: 18–27.	4: 35–41.	[9:57–62. 8: 22–25;	.....
51	Two demoniacs of Gadara healed.	8: 28–34.	5: 1–20.	8: 26–39.	.....
52	Levi's feast. Jesus's consequent discourse. The raising of Jairus's daughter.....	9: 1,10-26	[5:22-43. 2: 15–22;	[8:41-56. 5: 29–39,	.....
53	Jesus heals two blind men.....	9: 27–31.	.....	.....	.....
54	Jesus casts out a dumb spirit. The Pharisees again blaspheme.	9: 32–34.	(see § 42)	.....	.....
55	Jesus revisits Nazareth, and is again rejected there.....	13:54–58.	6: 1–6.	.....	.....
	PERIOD FIFTH. APOSTOLIC COMMISSION, AND MINISTRY AT ZENITH.				
56	The occasion of sending forth the twelve apostles to preach and work miracles.....	9: 36–38.	.....	.....	.....
57	The twelve are instructed and sent forth	10: 1,5-42	6: 7–11.	9: 1–5.	.....
58	Jesus continues his tour through Galilee.....	11: 1.	.....	.....	.....

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
59	The twelve preach repentance and work miracles everywhere	.....	6: 12, 13.	9: 6.	.....
60	The death of John the Baptist..	14: 6–12.	6: 21–29.	3: 19, 20.	.....
61	Herod hears of Jesus's fame, and desires to see him.....	14: 1, 2.	6: 14–16.	9: 7–9.	.....
62	Return of the twelve.....	.....	6: 30, 31.	9: 10.	.. ....
63	Five thousand are fed on five loaves and two fishes.....	14:13–21.	6: 32–44.	9: 10–17.	6 1–14.
64	Jesus walks on the sea.....	14:22–36.	6: 45–56.	.....	6: 15–21.
65	Jesus discourses with the multitude in Capernaum, in the synagogue of that city, and with his disciples. Peter's confession.....	.....	.....	.....	[7: 1 6: 22–71;
	Third Passover.				
66	Jesus's discourse with the Pharisees and scribes, and with his disciples, about eating with unwashen hands	15: 1–20.	7: 1–23.	.....	.....
67	Jesus heals the daughter of a Syrophenician woman.....	15:21–28.	7: 24–30.	.....	.....
68	Jesus restores to a person hearing and speech.....	15:29–31.	7: 31–37.	.....	.....
69	Jesus feeds more than four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes.....	15:32–39.	8: 1–10.	.....	.....
70	The Pharisees and Sadducees again ask a sign.....	16: 1–4.	8: 11, 12.	(see § 43)	.....
71	The disciples are cautioned against the leaven of the Pharisees, of the Sadducees, and of Herod	16: 4–12.	8: 13–21.	.....	.....
72	Jesus restores a blind man to sight near Bethsaida.....	.....	8: 22–26.	.....	.....
73	Peter's confession; endowment of the twelve with the keys.....	16:13–20.	8: 27–30.	9: 18–21.	(see § 65)
	PERIOD SIXTH TRANSFIGURATION, AND MINISTRY OF SORROW AND STRUGGLE.				
74	Jesus plainly foretells his sufferings and resurrection; rebukes Peter; exhorts all to self-denial	16:21–28.	8: 31–38.	9 22–27.	.. ...
75	Jesus's transfiguration; his discourse with the three disciples as they were descending from the mountain.....	17: 1–13.	9: 2–13.	9: 28–36.	.....
76	Jesus casts out a dumb and deaf spirit....	17:14–21.	9: 14–29.	9: 37–43.	.....

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
77	Jesus again foretells his suffering and resurrection	17: 22,23.	9: 30–32.	9: 43–45.	.....
78	Jesus works a miracle to pay the tribute money	17:24–27.	9: 33.	.....	.....
79	The disciples contend who should be the greatest. Jesus's conduct and discourse on that occasion	18: 1–35.	9: 33–50.	9: 46–50.	.....
80	Seventy disciples are instructed and sent out	.....	.....	10: 1–16.	.....
81	Jesus going up to, and first Discourse, at the Feast of Tabernacles, to the hostile Jews	.....	.....	.....	[8: 1. 7: 2–53;
82	The woman taken in adultery	.....	.....	.....	8: 2–11.
83	Jesus's third Discourse, at the Feast of Tabernacles, to the hostile Jews	.....	.....	.....	8: 12–59.
84	Cure of the blind-born, and fourth Discourse at the Feast of Tabernacles	.....	.....	.....	[10:1-21. 9: 1–41;
85	Return of the seventy	.....	.....	10:17–24.	.....
86	Jesus instructs a lawyer by the parable of the Good Samaritan.	.....	.....	10:25–37.	.....
87	The disciples are again taught how to pray	.....	.....	11: 1–13.	.....
88	The woman loosed from the spirit of infirmity of eighteen years.	.....	.....	13:10–21.	.....
89	Are few saved? Herod's message to Jesus	.....	.....	13:22–35.	.....
90	The transactions when our Lord ate bread with a chief Pharisee on the Sabbath	.....	.....	14: 1–24.	.....
91	Jesus states to the multitude the difficulties attending a profession of his religion	.....	.....	14:25–35.	.....
92	Jesus, in defense of his instructing publicans and sinners, narrates the parable of the Prodigal Son	.....	.....	15: 1–32.	.....
93	To his disciples Jesus gives the parables of the Unjust Steward and of Dives and Lazarus, and rebukes the Pharisees	.....	.....	16: 1–31.	.....
94	Jesus further instructs his disciples	.....	.....	17: 1–10.	.....
95	The Samaritans will not receive Jesus. James and John reproved for their zeal against them	.....	.....	9: 51–56.	.....
96	Jesus cleanses ten lepers	.....	.....	17:11–19.	.....
97	The Pharisees ask when the kingdom of God should come. Jesus's answer	.....	.....	17:20–37.	.....

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
98	Jesus speaks a parable to his disciples, and another to certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous.....	.....	.....	18: 1–14.	.....
99	Jesus received into Martha's house.....	.....	.....	10:38–42.	.....
100	Jesus, at Jerusalem, at the feast of dedication.....	.....	.....	.....	10:22–39
101	Jesus goes again to Bethabara after the feast of dedication. See John i, 28.....	.....	.....	.....	10:40–42.
	PERIOD SEVENTH. THE FINAL JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM, AND CONTEST THERE.				
102	Lazarus raised from the dead. The consequences of this miracle.....	.....	.....	.....	11: 1–54.
103	Jesus enters Judea. The Pharisees question him about divorces.....	19: 1–12.	10: 1–12.	.....	.....
104	Jesus lays his hand on young children and blesses them....	19 13–15.	10:13–16.	18:15–17.	.....
105	Jesus's discourse in consequence of being asked by a rich man how he should attain eternal life.....	[16. 19:16–20:	10:17–31.	18:18–30.	.....
106	Jesus, as he is going up to Jerusalem, foretells his sufferings to the twelve apart. See §§ 74, 77.	20:17–19.	10:32–34.	18:31–34.	.....
107	The ambitious request of James and John.....	20:20–28.	10:35–45.	.....	.....
108	Jesus restores sight to two blind men near Jericho.....	20:29–34.	10:46–52.	18:35–43.	.....
109	Jesus visits Zaccheus.....	.....	.....	19: 1–28.	.....
110	Jesus arrives at Bethany six days before the passover.....	.....	.....	.....	11:55–57;
111	Jesus proceeds to Jerusalem amid the acclamations of the disciples and of the multitude. The transactions there.....	21: 1–17.	11: 1–11.	19:28–44.	[12: 1. 12:12–50
112	The barren fig-tree. The temple cleansed.....	[18, 19. 21: 12,13,	11:12–19.	19:45–48.	.....
113	The disciples observe the fig-tree withered away.....	21:20–22.	11:20–26.	.....	.....
114	Jesus's discourse with the chief priests, scribes, and elders in the temple.....	[14. 21:23–22:	[12. 11:27–12:	20: 1–19.	.....
115	The Pharisees and Herodians. The Sadducees and one of the Pharisees, who was a scribe, question Jesus. Jesus questions the Pharisees.....	22:15–46.	12:12–37.	20:20–44.	.....

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
116	Jesus, in the hearing of his disciples and of the multitude, reproves the scribes and Pharisees to their face with a divine eloquence	23: 1–39.	12:38–40.	20:45–47.	.....
117	Jesus prefers the widow's offering to the gifts of the rich...	.....	12:41–44.	21: 1–4.	.....
118	Jesus foretells the destruction of Jerusalem, and distinguishes it from the final judgment....	[30. 24: 1–25:	13: 1–37.	21. 5–36.	.....
119	Picture of the final judgment. How Jesus employed himself during the week	25:31–46	.....	21: 37,38.	.....
120	The remaining transactions of the Tuesday preceding the crucifixion	26: 1–16.	14: 1–11.	22: 1–6.	12: 2–11.
	PERIOD EIGHTH. THE SUFFERING.				
121	Jesus prepares to keep the passover	26:17–19.	14:12–16.	22: 7–13.	.....
122	Jesus sits down with the twelve. There is an ambitious contention among the twelve.	26: 20.	14: 17.	[24–30. 22:14–18,	.....
123	Jesus washes the feet of his disciples.	.....	.....	.....	13: 1–20.
124	Jesus foretells that Judas would betray him. The conduct of the disciples and of Judas....	26:21–25.	14:18–21.	22:21–23.	13:21–35.
125	Jesus foretells to the apostles the fall of Peter, and their common danger	26:31–35.	14:27–31.	22:31–38.	13:36–38.
126	Jesus institutes the breaking of bread in remembrance of his body broken	26: 26.	14: 22.	22: 19.	[23,24. 1 Cor. 11:
127	Jesus comforts his disciples....	.....	.....	.....	14: 1–31.
128	Jesus institutes the drinking of wine in remembrance of his blood shed	26:27–29.	14:23–25.	22: 20.	[25. 1 Cor. 11:
129	Jesus resumes his discourse to his disciples	.....	.....	.....	[33. 14:31–16.
130	Jesus's prayer	.....	.....	.....	17: 1–26
131	The agony of Jesus in Gethsemane	[46. 26:30,36–	[42. 14:26,32–	22:39–46.	18: 1.
132	The betrayal of Jesus	26:47–56.	14:43–52.	22:47–53.	18: 2–12.
133	Jesus is brought before Annas and Caiaphas. Peter denies him thrice	26:57–75.	14:53–72.	22:54–62.	[24–27. 18:13–18.
134	Jesus stands before Caiaphas, and then before the whole Jewish council. He confesses himself to be the Christ and is pronounced guilty of death...	[68. 26:57,59–	[65. 14:53,55–	22:63–71.	18:19–23

Sec.	Harmony.	Matthew.	Mark.	Luke.	John.
135	Jesus is taken before Pilate....	27: 1–14.	15: 1–5.	23: 1–5.	18:28–38.
136	Jesus is sent to Herod by Pilate; he is sent back by Herod....	.....	.....	23: 6–12.	.....
137	Pilate seeks to release Jesus...	27:15–23.	15: 6–14.	23:13–23.	18: 39,40.
138	Pilate, having scourged Jesus, and having repeated his attempts to release him, delivered him, because of the clamors of the Jews, to be crucified.	27:24–31.	15:15–20.	23:23–25.	19: 1–16
139	Repentance and death of Judas.	27: 3–10.	Acts1:18,	.....	.....
140	Leading forth and crucifixion of Jesus.....	27:32–34.	[19. 15:21–23.	23:26–33.	19: 17.
141	Transactions while Jesus was on the cross till he expired.....	27:35–50.	15:24–37.	23:33–46.	19:18–30.
142	Transactions at Jesus's death. Who were present during the crucifixion. The remaining transactions of the day.....	27:51–61.	15:38–47.	[56. 23:45,47–	19:31–42.
143	The transactions on the day after the crucifixion.....	27:62–66.	.....	.....	.....
	PERIOD NINTH. RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.				
144	The transactions on the day of the resurrection before the women visit the sepulchre...	[28:2–4. 27: 52,53;	16: 1.	.....	.....
145	The women visit the sepulchre the first time.....	28: 1,5–8.	16: 2–8.	24: 1–11.	20: 1, 2.
146	Peter and John visit the sepulchre	.....	.....	24: 12.	20: 3–10.
147	Jesus appears first to Mary Magdalene.....	.....	16: 9.	.....	20:11–17.
148	Second appearance of Jesus....	28: 9, 10.	16: 10,11.	.....	20: 18.
149	The watch report, and are bribed to silence.....	28:11–15.	.....	.....	.....
150	Jesus, having been seen by Peter, appears to the two disciples who went to Emmaus...	1Cor.15:5	16:12, 13.	24:13–35.	.....
151	Jesus appears to the apostles in the absence of Thomas.....	1Cor.15:5	16:14–18.	24:36–49.	20:19–23.
152	Jesus again appears to the apostles while Thomas is present.	.....	.....	.....	20:24–29
153	The Apostles go into Galilee. Jesus appears at the sea of Tiberias.....	28: 16.	.....	.....	21: 1–24.
154	The appearance of Jesus to his disciples in Galilee.....	28:16–20.	.....	.....	.....
155	Other appearances of Jesus....	[6, 7. 1 Cor. 15:	[8. Acts 1:3–	.....	.....
156	Ascension of Jesus.....	..... [12.	16: 19,20.	24:50–53.	..... [21:25.
157	St. John's conclusion.....	Acts 1: 9–	.....	.....	20: 30,31.

For modification of a part of the above Synopsis, see vol. ii, page 101.

THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

THE book of the [a] generation of Jesus Christ, [b] the son of David, [c] the son of Abraham.

2 [d] Abraham begat Isaac; and

a Luke 3. 23.—*b* Psa. 132. 11; Isa. 11. 1; Jer. 23. 5; chap. 22. 42; John 7. 42; Acts 2. 30; 13. 23; Rom. 1. 3.—*c* Gen. 12. 3; 22. 18; Gal. 3. 16. *d* Gen. 21. 2, 3.

The Gospel.—The term Gospel is compounded of the two Saxon words *god*, good, and *spel*, news. It is the good news of a Saviour's birth, life, and death, sent from God to man. The Greek word *εὐαγγέλιον*, *evangelium*, (whence comes our word *evangelist*,) has precisely a parallel etymology. The word *gospel*, from being the name for the *subject* of the four histories of our Lord, became, almost immediately after their publication, the title of the *books* themselves. Hence this book is called the Gospel *according to Matthew*, as being its author.

§ 9.—THE ROYAL PEDIGREE OF JESUS THROUGH HIS LEGAL FATHER, 1–17.

1. *The book*—Rather a roll or scroll than a book. For when we read the word *book* in the Bible, or any work of antiquity, we must completely banish all conception of a modern volume from the press, bound in leather, neatly printed on fine paper, cheap, and easy to handle. On the contrary, we must shape in thought a cumbrous roll of linen, papyrus, or parchment, with letters laboriously written with a *calamus* or reed pen, or a *stilus* or iron pen, very expensive, and to be read by unrolling successive portions. When rolled up, it was bound round with thongs, called in Latin, *lora*. The scroll was continuous in length, and was read by unrolling the one end, and rolling up the other end, so as to glide the eye down the open page, as is seen by the illustration on the next page. The Latin word for roll, *volumen*, (from *volvo*, to roll,) is the origin of our word volume. When the reading was finished the Romans deposited the roll in a round case or box called *scrinium*. As comparatively few could possess a book, authors often read their productions in public. And it was important that very valuable documents should be kept in a safe repository. Manuscript copies of the Old Testament were kept in the temple and the synagogues. So also copies of the Gospels and Epistles were preserved in the Christian churches. When the author produced his book, it was immediately transcribed, and copies were put in circulation among purchasers; others were deposited in the archives of the various churches. The multiplied copies were checks upon each others' correctness. Of the Gospels and Epistles, numerous copies were circulated in Europe, Asia, and Africa within a century after their first publication. It was therefore impossible that any counterfeit, or any great alteration, should come into existence. The very perfect agreement (with the exception of slight mistakes in copying) of all

manuscript copies throughout the world, places beyond all doubt the genuineness of all the four Gospels.

The first two chapters of Matthew are in some degree a sort of separate part or section, giving an account of the royal pedigree and divine birth and infancy of the Saviour. They are so given as to demonstrate, both by miracle and prophecy, that he is the true Messiah, the God-man, the Divine Saviour which was to come.

The book of the generation—Strictly, this is the title of the genealogy or pedigree only which now follows. But as in the Old Testament, so here, the pedigree is naturally followed by biographical sketches and narrations. Matthew doubtless gives the genealogy of Joseph; (and so it was only the *legal* genealogy of Mary and Jesus;) whereas Luke gives the natural descent of Mary. It was customary with the Jews very carefully to preserve their pedigrees or family registers. We see them distributed all through the Old Testament. They were cherished especially from the fact that in some family the Messiah was to be born. So Josephus, who was of priestly family, says: "I give the descent of our family *exactly as I find it written in the public records.*" So noble a family line as that of the royal David, of course had its records public at Bethlehem, the place of David's birth; to which place Mary had to go and be enrolled by public authority. Matthew either gives the public record *verbatim*, or perhaps the family tree with its abridgements and annotations, as kept in Joseph's home. In the time of the Emperor Domitian, about the close of the first century, all the descendants of David were sought out by royal command. The rumour of their regal descent had rendered the emperor jealous. The descendants of our Lord's brethren were brought into his presence, and questioned as to their claims of royalty. But as they appeared to be unambitious Christian men, looking only for a heavenly kingdom, the emperor dismissed them in peace.

That the record of David's royal line was preserved, we are expressly told by Josephus, who says in his autobiography, "I am myself of the royal lineage by my mother." When Jerusalem was sacked, the genealogical records were completely destroyed; so that it is impossible for the Jews to trace the line of David for any Messiah yet to come. This is a complete refutation of their expectations of that kind.

Jesus Christ—The word *Jesus* is, in Greek form, the same as *Joshua* in Hebrew, and implies Saviour. Our Lord was so named (ver. 21) by express command of the angel: first, to indicate that he was the Saviour from sin; and second, to show that he was the antitype of Joshua, his type; for as Joshua was leader of Israel, bringing them into the earthly Canaan, Jesus is a Saviour, bringing his people into a heavenly Canaan. So, often in the Bible, names are significant and typical, being divinely and prophetically given for that very purpose. The word *Christ* is not primarily a proper name, but is a word of royal office. It is derived from the

[e]Isaac begat Jacob; and [f]Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;

3 And [g]Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and [h]Pha-

e Gen. 25. 26.—f Gen. 29. 35.—g Gen. 38. 27, &c.—h Ruth 4. 18, &c.; 1 Chron. 2. 5, 9, &c.

Greek χρίω, *chrio, to anoint;* and is exactly parallel with the Hebrew word Messiah, both signifying *anointed.* For as the Hebrews anointed kings and priests to their dignity, so kings and priests were called *anointed;* and so the prophets foretold him who was to come under the royal and priestly title of Anointed, Messiah or CHRISTOS. Under this title he was earnestly waited for by the Jews, and even by the Samaritans, as the Samaritan woman testifies: *I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ.* John iv, 25. Hence our Saviour's *name* was Jesus; and his *office* was to be the Christ, or royal Messiah.

Son of David—The word *son* here, as often elsewhere in Scripture, signifies *descendant* at any distance of descent. This parentage from David proves even his human royalty. He was by blood a king; by the law of race entitled to be anointed and crowned. He was entitled to expel Herod from his throne, and reign in his stead king of the Jews. *Son of Abraham*—We have remarked in the notice of Matthew, that he wrote more particularly for the Jews. For this reason he traces the Lord's genealogy to David, the Jewish king, and to Abraham, the founder of the Jewish dispensation. Luke, on the other hand, writing for Gentiles, traces the genealogy up to Adam, the human, and to God, the divine father of ALL. There are many difficulties found by learned men in the genealogies of Matthew and Luke. Some of these difficulties arise in reconciling the two; others arise from peculiarities of this genealogy itself. The consideration of the former belong to a commentary upon Luke. The latter we shall briefly notice in our notes upon this chapter.

2. *Begat Isaac*—His birth is given Gen. xxi, 2. *Jacob*—Gen. xxv, 26. *Judas and his brethren*—Gen. xxix.

And his brethren—At several points in the genealogy there are individual matters added, not forming an essential part of the lineage. Such are the clauses *and his brethren* in this verse; *and Zara of Thamar* in the third verse; *of Rachab* in the fifth verse; *the king* in the sixth verse; and *of her that had been the wife of Urias* in the same verse. Profound reasons have been sought for these additions, somewhat unnecessarily, by commentators. If we may suppose Matthew to have copied the *home genealogy* in the family of Joseph, these incidents may easily be supposed to have been freely inserted as interesting allusions to popular points or characters in Jewish sacred history. Certainly no genealogy of that day could have suggested more points of interesting reminiscence than that of this son of David, and putative father of the Messiah. The only difficulty is with the clause concerning Rachab, who, as some have thought, could not, upon chronological grounds, have been identical with the Rahab of Jericho, if she were the wife of Salmon.

But Alford well says: "Those very grounds completely tally with their identity. For Naashon (the father of Salmon) offered his offering at the setting up of the tabernacle (Num. vii, 12) thirty-nine years before the taking of Jericho. So that Salmon would be of mature age at or soon after that event; at which time Rahab was probably young, as her father and mother were living (Josh. vi, 23.) Nor is it any objection that Achan, the fourth in descent from Judah by Zara, is contemporary with Salmon, the sixth of the other branch, since the generations in the line of Zara average sixty-nine years, and those in the line of Pharez forty-nine; both within the limits of probability. The difficulty of the interval of 366 years between Rahab and David does not belong to this passage only, but equally to Ruth iv, 21, 22; and is by no means insuperable, especially when the extreme old age of Jesse, implied in 1 Sam. xvii, 12, is considered."

3. *Phares and Zara*—Gen. xxxviii, 27.

res begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;

4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6 And [1] Jesse begat David the king; and [k] David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

7 And [l] Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

10 And [m] Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

11 And [l n] Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were [o] carried away to Babylon:

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i 1 Sam. 16. 1; 17. 12.— *k* 2 Sam. 12. 24. *l* 1 Chron. 3. 10. &c.— *m* 2 Kin. 20. 21; 1 Chron. 3. 13.— 1 Some read, *Josias begat Jakim, and Jakim begat Jechonias.*— *n* See 1 Chron. 3. 15, 16.— *o* 2 Kin. 24. 14–16; 25. 11; 2 Chron. 36. 20; Jer. 27. 20; 39. 9; 52. 11, 15, 28–30; Dan. 1 2.

From Pharez to David the genealogy is furnished in Ruth iv, 18–22.

We present a comparative catalogue of the names in Matthew, and the Old Testament:

Matthew.	Gen. v, x, xi, and Ruth iv.	1 Chr. i, ii, and iii.
Abraham	Abram	Abraham
Isaac	———	Isaac
Jacob	———	Israel
Judas	———	Judah
Phares	———	Pharez
Esrom	Hezron	Hezron
Aram	Ram	Ram
Aminadab	Amminadab	Amminadab
Naason	Nahshon	Nahshon
Salmon	Salmon	Salma
Booz	Boaz	Boaz
Obed	Obed	Obed
Josse	Jesse	Jesse
David. 14	David	David, 14.
Solomon	———	Solomon
Roboam	———	Rehoboam
Abia	———	Abia
Asa	———	Asa
Josaphat	———	Jehoshaphat
Joram	———	Joram
———	———	Ahaziah
———	———	Joash
———	———	Amaziah
Ozias	David	Azariah
Joatham	———	Jotham
Achaz	———	Ahaz
Ezekias	———	Hezekiah
Manasses	———	Manasseh
Amon	———	Amon
Josias	———	Josiah
———, 14	———	Jehoiakim
Jechonias	———	Jeconiah
Salathiel	———	Salathiel & Pedaiah
Zorobabel	———	Zerubbabel
———	———	Hananiah
———	———	Pelatiah & Rephaiah
———	———	Arnan
Abiud	———	Obadiah
Eliakim	———	Shechaniah
———	———	Shemaiah
———	———	Neariah
Azor	———	Elioenai & Azrikam
———	———	Johanan & Anani
Sadoc	———	———
Acheim	———	———
Elioud	———	———
Eleazar	———	———
Matthan	———	———
Jacob	———	———
Joseph	———	———
Jesus, 14	———	———

See an excellent article by Dr. Strong, in the Methodist Quarterly Review, Oc-

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, [p] Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat [q] Zorobabel;

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;

14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David

[p] 1 Chron. 3. 17, 18, 19.

[q] Ezra 3. 2; Neh. 12. 1; Hag. 1. 1.

tober, 1852, for an investigation of these genealogies.

By comparing these lists, it will be seen that there are three names, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah, which occur in the Old Testament, (namely, in Chronicles,) which are omitted in Matthew in making out the second of his three *fourteens* in verse 17. If these were reckoned, the number would be seventeen. Upon this we shall remark in our note on that verse.

In the article to which we have referred, Dr. Strong compares the genealogy of Matthew (which we might call the home family tree of Joseph) with those of Luke and Chronicles, in the third *fourteen;* he finds farther omissions in it; and after elaborately showing the fair agreement of names between the three catalogues of this *fourteen*, he makes the following statement:

"As the list in the Chronicles ends here, bringing down the lineage some nine generations after Zerubbabel, under whom the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity, that is, to about B. C. 280, we have only the surprisingly short period of about two centuries and a half preceding Christ's immediate parentage, during which his whole descent is not vouched for by the sacred archives of the Jewish nation."

17. *All the generations*—The word *generations*, perhaps, here denotes the links in the *recorded* genealogical chain. This summation into three nearly equal parts is primarily made to aid the memory. At the same time it marks the *three great stages* of Jewish history; and shows that Christ's coming was a great historical epoch. The three periods constitute the *morning*, the *noonday*, and the *evening* of the Jewish history, before Christ. The *morning* embraces the patriarchal, the Egyptian, and the Mosaic periods. The *noonday* embraces the monarchy from the glorious days of David and Solomon to its termination in Jechonias. The *evening*, or period of decline, beginning with the captivity and the restoration, embraces the cessation of prophecy and divine communications during the second temple. During this period the Maccabees, or Asmonean princes of the priestly line, defended their country with a splendid secular heroism, and crowned her with independence, until the time of HEROD, surnamed the Great, whose wife Mariamne belonged to that illustrious line. During much of this time the High Priesthood was nearly equal in power to the ancient royalty. But the royal line of David was sunk into obscurity, and flowed along in secret like a noiseless and slender stream in a dense and silent forest. Accordingly the names in both Gospel genealogies, after the cessation of Old Testament records, are found only in the family pedigrees. They are names unknown to history. When the fullness of time came, the angel is sent to a maiden of that line residing in the insignificant and unhistorical village of Nazareth.

From Abraham to David—From Abraham to Christ was in round numbers 2,000 years. David was nearly the middle point between these two; so that from Abraham to David was about one thousand years. Yet so long were

until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

18 ¶ Now the [r]birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child [s]of the Holy Ghost.

[r] Luke 1. 27.

[s] Luke 1. 35.

the lives of the patriarchs, that it required but fourteen generations to fill that 1,000 years; whereas to fill the second thousand, namely, from David to Christ, required twice fourteen, or twenty-eight generations.

From David until the carrying away—This period was filled by the monarchy of Israel. Of these kings, three occurring in the Old Testament are omitted by Matthew. Lightfoot has shown that omissions in genealogies often occurred. The most striking instance of such omission is found in Revelation, chap. vii, 5–8, where the tribe of Dan is omitted, probably on account of the idolatrous character of that tribe. It was probably for the double reason of marking the wicked character of these three kings, and to secure the mnemonic number of *fourteen*, that their names were omitted. Fourteen is twice the sacred number seven. Those who have traced through Scripture the many references to this sacred number *seven*, will not slight the idea that such a reference here exists.

Unto Christ—By counting it will be perceived that in this third period there are not fourteen generations, as mentioned by Matthew, but thirteen. But some early manuscripts of the New Testaments supply an important clause, which seems to have been omitted by the transcribers, which omission exists in the common text. The clause reads thus: *Josias begat Joakim and his brethren; and Joakim begat Jechonias about the time of the first Babylonish captivity; and Jechonias begat Selathiel after they were brought to Babylon.*

The supply of this clause solves every difficulty. Nor can there be a reasonable doubt that Matthew wrote these words. The authority for them in the early copies of the New Testament is respectable. But the internal argument demonstrates their genuineness. They are required by the facts of the Old Testament history, and they are required in the present passage in order to make sense.

§ 7. An Angel announces Jesus's Birth to Joseph. 18–25.

18. *Now the birth*—Having traced the pedigree of the Saviour as the prophesied Son of David, Matthew now proceeds to furnish in the history of his birth the proof of his divine Incarnation, that is, his *embodiment in the flesh.* Upon the stock of our sinful humanity is to be grafted a sinless member. From the dust of the earth, by Almighty power, was created the first Adam; by the same Almighty power, in the dust of our humanity, is to be created the second Adam. The doctrine of the Incarnation, as held by the ancient Church, is thus impressively expressed in the Nicene Creed: "We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man." This is a beautiful summary of the New Testament doctrine of the personal nature of Jesus the Christ.

On this wise—In this manner. This old word *wise* for *manner* is now obsolete in ordinary style. It is still used in the words *likewise*, *otherwise*, etc. It resembles the word way or ways, but has no etymological connection with it.

When as—This old English phrase has at the present day dropped the *as*.

His mother Mary—Of Mary, the mother of Jesus, little is said by the evangelists after the narrative of the birth of Jesus. Tradition adds a few points of little historical value. After the childhood of Jesus, she appears at the wedding of Cana; and again in company with his brethren to induce him to retire from the crowds of Galilee to the home of his childhood, Nazareth. She appears again at the cross; but not at the resurrection. At Calvary, she was consigned by her dying Son to the care, not of his brethren, but of the beloved disciple John. She is named for the last time in the New Testament (Acts i, 14) as associating with the disciples at Jerusalem after the ascension.

Mary is by tradition said to have died in the year 63. She was claimed by a letter of the General Council of Ephesus, in the fifth century, to have died and been buried at that city, which was the apostolic residence of John during the closing days of his life.

The immaculate conception of Mary, that is, her sinlessness from birth, is now an article of faith in the Church of Rome. This is not only undeclared in Scripture, but is in contradiction to its most positive doctrines. That all the race have fallen in Adam, with the exception of Christ alone, that all alike are saved by his merits, is the uniform language of Scripture. That Mary is an exception is nowhere intimated. About the fifth century the worship of Mary commenced in the Romish Church; and in the sixth, her festivals began to be generally observed. To such extravagant lengths has this been carried, that, at the present day, at Rome, the religion of Mary has superseded the religion of Jesus. Idolatry in heathendom is almost surpassed by the Mariolatry of the popedom. The only pretext in Scripture for this worship is the language of the angel, (Luke i, 28,) *Blessed art thou among women*, etc.; language which is paralleled by the words concerning Jael in Judges v, 24. If we examine all the writings of Paul, they contain no reference to Mary. Neither the Epistles nor Apocalypse of John, to whose care she was intrusted, make any allusion to her. Peter, who was acquainted with her, mentions her not in his letters. Neither in the Epistles nor in the Gospels, is any human being described as offering any invocation to her; nor is any authority given for such a practice. But though, beyond the maternity of the Redeemer, Mary is unrecognized in the scheme of salvation, yet this distinction secures for her our special reverence, as standing eminent among her sex, and alone amid our race. To her belong, not indeed mediation, nor worship, nor invocation, nor omnipresence, nor prayer to aid our souls or bodies, but reverence, as for the one selected by God to be the mother of the Incarnate. *Was espoused*—Contracted in marriage. An espousal among the Jews was nearly as sacred as the marriage vow itself. Though the woman remained at her father's house until after marriage, yet during that time of espousal before marriage, a violation of the contract by unchastity was equivalent in criminality and in punishment to adultery. *To Joseph*—Of Joseph, the husband of Mary, but little account is given in the Scripture. He was descended from the royal line of David; and hence is addressed by the angel in verse 20, *Joseph, thou son of David.* But though of regal descent, he resided in obscurity in the small and not very reputable town of Nazareth. According to the Jewish custom, which requires that every man, however high his rank, should be master of a manual trade, Joseph was a *carpenter*. That is, this English word is the most obvious translation of the Greek term; although it may be extended to mean a *smith* or *artificer* of any kind. Nothing is said of Joseph indicating that he possessed a very marked character. Yet his whole conduct justifies the statement that he was a *just* man. All his procedures appear simple, pure, obedient to the divine requirements, and faithfully fulfilling the duties of his peculiar relation. Though it is not asserted

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing [t]to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on

[t] Deut. 24. 1.

yet it is too clearly implied to admit a doubt, that JOSEPH *died during the childhood of* JESUS. Mary, the *mother* of Jesus, as well as his *brethren* sometimes appears during the ministry of Jesus, but never JOSEPH. *Of the Holy Ghost*—So that the Lord, being the child of a purely human mother and of a Divine Father, should at once be the Son of man and the Son of God—the God-man. This miraculous fact was predicted by the first prophecy that the seed of the WOMAN (and not of the man) should bruise the head of the serpent. Hence the idea of an incarnation, by means of a pure virgin from a divine father, has been adopted into various systems of Paganism. Instances of this are Romulus among the Romans, Melkarth (or Hercules) among the Syrians; and greatest of all, as St. Jerome remarked centuries ago, Boodha among the Hindus. The Latin Church styles Mary the *Virgo Deipara*, or Virgin God-mother. Mr. Milman remarks that the first Romanist missionaries to the East were dismayed at finding in the stupendous system of Boodhism a *Virgo Deipara*. *Holy Ghost*—The word *ghost* is derived from the Saxon word *gast*, and signifies *spirit*. *Ghostly*, in older English, (of which *ghastly* is a cognate,) signifies *spiritual*. *Holy Ghost* is therefore precisely synonymous with *Holy Spirit*. Inasmuch as the word *ghost* is almost exclusively applied in the English of the present day to the apparition of a departed human *spirit*, it would be better perhaps, in case of a new translation, to disuse the word ghost in this connection.

That God is a Spirit is plentifully revealed in Scripture. Yet this Spirit speaks of his Spirit. Gen. vi, 3; lix, 21. God sends forth his his Spirit. Prov. i, 23; Isa. xlii, 1. This Spirit thus sent forth is an agent, Acts viii, 29; x, 19; and a person, being designated by a personal pronoun. John xv, 26. This Spirit is associated with Father and Son in the baptismal command, and, like the other two, has his *name* or personal appellation. Matt. xxviii, 19. So the same three appear in the apostolical benediction. 2 Cor. xiii, 13. Here the Father is the personal source of love, the Son of grace, and the Holy Spirit of communion. Yet God's spirit must be divine, omnipotent, and eternal. God is universally in Scripture declared to be one. Here, therefore, we find that in some one mysterious respect God is trine, and in some other unfathomable respect he is one. Here, then, we have a three-one, a Triune, a Trinity. This view of the sacred word has been faithfully held by the faithful Christian Church in all ages. Wherever it is denied, rationalism and skepticism are sure gradually to gain the ascendant, and the Gospel life is lost.

The doctrine of the Christian Church in all ages, as derived from the word of God, is thus expressed in our first Article of Faith: "There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness: the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead, there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

19. *Just man*—Just, not in its severe sense, but in its milder meaning of a *fair* man, unwilling to inflict unnecessary misery, even in effecting a proper penalty. *Make her a public example*—By the terrible death, namely, by being stoned to death with her accomplice, prescribed in Deut. xxii, 23, 24. *Put her away privily*—By simply a note of dismissal or bill of divorcement, as described in Deut. xxiv, 1.

20. *Angel of the Lord*—During the four hundred years intervening between the Old Testament and the New, prophecy, miracle, inspiration, and

these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take

angelic appearance had ceased. This interval of cessation and silence was broken by the preparation for the appearance of Jesus the Saviour. The first phenomenon opening his new dispensation was the appearance of the angel GABRIEL in the temple, announcing to Zechariah the birth of John the Baptist, forerunner of the Messiah. This Epiphany was followed by a profusion of miraculous displays of every variety of nature, preceding the birth, attending the ministry, and following the ascension of the Son of God. Angels appear in their splendour, devils in their malignity; dreams, miracles, and divine operations of various nature surround and attend the sacred person of the Lord. It was a miraculous dispensation, a supernatural epoch, in which the powers of heaven and hell came forth in manifestations extraordinary and unparalleled, and not to be tested by the experience of ordinary ages. It is not for us to say, who live in the common level of human history, that angelic appearances and demoniacal possessions did not transpire during the period in which *God's own Son was incarnate*. That greatest of miracles might well imply, and properly be attended by, a retinue of inferior but kindred facts.

The *angel of the Lord* appeared to our Lord's ostensible father, to announce the birth of the human Son of God. The word angel signifies *messenger*, and is chiefly used in Scripture to designate a living *spiritual being sent by God to perform some supernatural ministry*. It is not true that angels first appear in Scripture at the Babylonish captivity. Angelic appearances to Abraham and to Lot are narrated in Genesis, and to Manoah in Judges. A reference to a concordance will show that the word *angel*, as a term for a superhuman being, abounds in the Old Testament.

Yet it is no doubt true that there are names for the angels, which appear for the first time, in the Scriptures, after the captivity. These names may have been matters of a later revelation to the Jews Or the Persians may have retained, traditionally, a primitive revelation of their names. Or, more probably than either supposition, the names were of human origin; but being of significant meaning, these angelic beings, when appearing to human eyes, adapt themselves to the human conception by adopting the human significant name appropriate to themselves. It cannot be supposed that these angels retain these human names in the spiritual world. As they adapt themselves to human form, and speak with a human voice, so do they identify themselves to human acquaintance by some familiar yet descriptive appellation. So the angel appearing to Zechariah (Luke i, 19) says: "I am Gabriel that stands in the presence of God." And in the 26th verse, this same Gabriel is named as announcing to Mary the approaching birth of the Messiah. Now this Gabriel appears in Daniel viii, 16, to explain the vision of the ram and he-goat; and what is still more striking, he interprets to Daniel (ix, 21–27) the vision of the seventy weeks. Thus the same Gabriel announces the most striking prediction of the Messiah to Daniel, of the harbinger of the Messiah to Zechariah, and of the *incarnation* of the Messiah to Mary. And the very appropriate appellation by which he declares himself to men is "God's strong one," for such is the import of the name.

No systematical view is given us of the angel worlds. No reverence or worship of them is required or justified. Human fancies among Jewish, Mohammedan, and some imaginative Christian writers, have constructed schemes and systems and worlds of angelology. But the references of Scripture to this class, or series of classes of beings, are incidental and reserved. The inference is that we have ordinarily little to do with them.

Self-sufficient philosophers, like Strauss, have announced that the age for the belief in such superior beings is

past. Natural philosophy has shown that the natural operations of the world are effected by natural forces, and the demand for such beings is crowded out of existence. As truly might they say that the exact forces of nature exclude *all voluntary agents*, human as well as superhuman. Nor can any philosophy prove that there are no personal intelligent beings in the universe superior in rank or power to man. On the contrary, the opinion is improbable even to absurdity, that the vast interval between little, finite man and the infinite One is entirely vacant, and filled by no living, intelligent occupants. Hence the existence of systems of beings of angelic rank is perpetually reasonable, and can never be superseded in any age by any advance of philosophy.

In a dream—Though dreams are usually the vain vagaries of our sleeping hours, which no sensible man usually regards, yet God has often made them the means of communicating warnings and directions. God, who made the mind, can shape its conceptions in sleep, as well as in wakefulness, to present supernatural information. Dreams were, however, considered by the Jews as an inferior sort of revelation. We may add that while an angel appeared in open sight both to Zechariah and to Mary to announce the illustrious births, and that angel no less than Gabriel, "that stands in the presence of God," to Joseph, as of inferior importance, appears an unnamed angel in a dream.

Thou son of David—A man simple in character, but illustrious by descent. It was absolutely essential that Mary should be a daughter of David, in order that Jesus might be truly of the seed of David according to the flesh. And it was important, though not essential, that Joseph should be of the line of David, in order that Christ should also *seem*, by his reputed father, a son of David, to the eyes of men.

That Messiah should be *son*, that is, descendant, of David, was so clearly and abundantly revealed in Old Testament prophecy as to be a settled point in Jewish theology. The Chaldee paraphrase, (which was the free translation of the Old Testament books, prepared after the return from the captivity, as the received expositor of Scripture, and read in the public service,) when it comes to the passage, (Isa. xi, 1,) "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse," etc., construes it thus: "A king shall come out of the sons of Jesse, and the Messiah out of his son's sons." And that this Davidic origin was the doctrine of the learned Jews in the Saviour's day, is evident from Mark xii, 35: "Say the scribes that Christ is the son of David." And so Matt. xxii, 42: "What think ye of Christ, whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David."

That Jesus was reputed to be, according to this doctrine, the son of David, is plentifully evident. Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to be taxed, "because they were of the house and lineage of David." Luke ii, 11. The blind men of Jericho cried: "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on us." The multitudes at the capital cry: "Hosanna to the son of David." And the heading of his genealogy is: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David." Matt. i, 1. And hence the angel of the annunciation is sent (Luke i, 22) to a virgin of the house of David. And of her offspring he promises, (ver. 32,) the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

Is of the Holy Ghost—It is part of the impurity of our depraved nature, that the subject of our own origin by birth should suggest other than pure thoughts. But the divine law hath established that through all nature a new life should be produced only from the method of double parentage. When therefore from a single human parent a new human person takes origin, a miracle of surpassing power, over and above nature, is performed, it may be truly believed to take place only "of the Holy Ghost."

This phrase is not to be so understood as to imply that the Holy Ghost is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Luke the angel declares to Mary: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing

unto thee Mary thy wife: [u]for that which is [2]conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 [x]And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name [3]JESUS: for [y]he shall save his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that

u Luke 1. 35.—2 Gr. *begotten.*
x Luke 1. 31.

3 That is, *SAVIOUR.*—y Acts 4. 12; 5. 31; 13. 23, 38.

which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." By this we are to understand simply that divine power was imparted to the human person of the virgin, from which a being of perfect holiness should be conceived and born, blending the divine and the human natures. From this whole matter all but the truly impious and profane will banish every impure and gross thought. Even in the most minute conceptions that our minds, in their trains of meditation, may be called upon to frame, our reverence will compel us to think of this one holy conception and birth with a purity and an awe suitable to the real sacredness and grandeur of so supernatural a fact and being.

21. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus*—We have already remarked, in our note on verse 1, that the name JESUS is equivalent in Greek to the Hebrew name of JOSHUA, who was his *type*, as being *the deliverer of Israel into the promised land.* The original name of Joshua was Hoshea, and Moses (doubtless by divine inspiration) changed his name to Joshua, in order to make it signify *the salvation of God.* Num. xiii, 16. Thus the *name* was given to indicate the *reality* of the thing. The *reality* was that Joshua should be God's saviour of Israel from their enemies, and their establisher in Canaan. As antitype to this, the same name is given, by the same divine direction, to the Lord our Saviour, because *he shall save his people from their sins.* As Joshua is redeemer of Israel from their enemies, and their establisher in Canaan, so Jesus is the Redeemer of believers from their sins, and their establisher in the heavenly Canaan. Whence we have the typical parallels:

Redeemer.	*The Redeemed.*	*The Evil.*	*The Result.*
Joshua	Israel	Enemies	Canaan.
Jesus	Believers	Sins	Heavenly Canaan.

We here also see Scripture instances in which the name is divinely imposed to signify the reality of the thing. The name of Jesus signifies saviour, and is given because he IS Saviour; from which we shall in the proper place infer that he is called Emmanuel, (verse 23,) signifying *God with us*, because he truly IS *God manifest in the flesh.* So that we may forcibly maintain against the doctrine of the mere humanity of Christ the sublime truth of the Incarnation.

For he shall save his people from their sins—From these words it is plain that however the Jews may have expected a political Messiah to save the nation from the Romans, the angel promised a Jesus, who *should save his people from their sins.* Modern neologists, who maintain that Jesus started at first with the purpose of forming a temporal kingdom. are contradicted by the very earliest declarations in the Gospels to the contrary.

22. *Now all this was done*—*All this* includes the whole narrative (from ver. 18) of the events of the miraculous birth. *That it might be fulfilled*—But did the entire train of events take place in order to fulfil that one prophecy? To obviate so absurd a meaning some learned men have shown that the phrase might be translated: *All this was done* SO THAT *it was fulfilled.* But the present translation leads to no absurd result. All these things did transpire, in order, among other and more direct purposes, to the fulfilment of that prophecy, inasmuch as the fulfilment of that prophecy was at the same time the accomplishment of the Incarnation of the Redeemer, and the verification of the divine prediction. Nor is there any predestinarian fatalism in all this. God predicts what he foresees that men will freely do; and then men do freely in turn fulfil what God predicts, and so unconsciously act in

it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 [z] Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and [4] they shall

z Isaiah 7. 14.

4 Or, *his name shall be called.*

order to verify God's veracity. Moreover there is no fatalism in supposing that God has high plans, which he does with infinite wisdom carry out through the free, unnecessitated, unpredestinated, though foreseen wills of men. Such is his inconceivable wisdom, that he can so place free agents in a free system of probation, that whichever way they freely turn they will but further his great generic plans and verify his foreknowledge. So that it may in a right sense be true that all things are done by free agents, *in order* to so desirable an end as to fulfil the divine foresight.

23. *Behold, a virgin*—Isa. vii, 14. This memorable prophecy was delivered by Isaiah, under the following circumstances: Ahaz, king of Judah, was invaded by the combined hosts of the kings of Israel and of Syria. He was reduced to the last extremity. Jehovah then sent Isaiah the prophet to offer him a SIGN that God would bring deliverance. The object of the command was to bring Ahaz to repose his faith in Jehovah. But though the prophet offered him a *sign* either in heaven or in earth, yet the idolatrous king refused to accept any sign. Whereupon the prophet, rebuking the king for wearying God, declares that God will give a *sign*, whether the king ask it or not, and whether it should be *to him* a sign or not. That *sign* is the standing sign for Israel for all ages, the future MESSIAH. *As that Messiah should come, so Judah should be preserved until his coming.* And when he should be born of *the* virgin, he should not grow to years of intelligence in a shorter time than would be required to sweep away those two invading kings from their power.

The words of the prophet, in our translation, are as follows: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call him Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

To this we will append the elegant and exact version of Bishop Lowth:

And Jehovah spake yet again to Ahaz, saying:
Ask thee a SIGN from Jehovah thy God:
Go deep to the grave, or high to the heaven above.
And Ahaz said: I will not ask; neither will I tempt Jehovah. And he said:
Hear ye now, O house of David:
Is it a small thing for you to weary men,
That you should weary my God also?
Therefore Jehovah himself shall give you a sign:
Behold, the virgin conceiveth, and beareth a son
And she shall call his name Immanuel.
Butter and honey shall he eat,
When he shall know to refuse what is evil, and to choose what is good:
For before this child shall know
To refuse the evil, and to choose the good;
The land shall become desolate,
By whose two kings thou art distressed.

Upon this memorable passage we remark:

1. The word *virgin* has, in the original Hebrew, the definite article *the*, THE *virgin.* This implies that a particular and known virgin is predicted, (specially recognized by the mind of the prophet,)* who, though a virgin, should bring forth an *Immanuel;* that is, a *God-with-us*, a *God-man.* Now we have already remarked (on ver. 18) that a Virgo Deipara is truly predicted in the first promise in Eden; and that the expectation was familiar to the ancient world. Melkarth, so near as in Syria, was fabled to be such a god-man. *The virgin*, then, of Isaiah, was THE *virgin* of prophetic fore-

* Prof. Nordheimer, in his Hebrew Grammar gives the following rule of syntax in regard to the Hebrew article: "The article is subjectively prefixed to a common noun by way of emphasis, and to point it out as one which, although neither previously or subsequently described, is still viewed as *definite in the mind of the writer.*" In Biblical Repository, October, 1841, Prof. Nordheimer showed the express application of the rule to this passage.

call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

24 Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth [a]her first-born son: and he called his name JESUS.

a Exod. 13. 2; Luke 2. 7, 21.

sight. 2. The tenses of the Hebrew in this passage are not all *future*. Hengstenberg renders it thus: "Behold THE virgin *has conceived* and *bears* a son, and she *calls* his name Immanuel." All this shows that Hengstenberg's view of *prophetic vision* is correct. The powerful conceptions of the prophet's mind become as a present reality. His mind's eye sees the panorama of future objects and events NOW standing and moving before him. Time is dropped out of the account. 3. This explains what to many commentators has been a great difficulty in the following verse, Isa. vii, 16. Before this ideal child, beheld in vision as NOW being born, is able to know good from evil, these two invading kings shall disappear. Isaiah takes the growth of the infant, conceptually present, as the measure of the continuance of the invading kings. That Immanuel, the predicted *seed* of the woman, the prophet sees as already being born; he is being fed on nourishing food, namely, butter and honey, to bring him to early maturity; but in a briefer period than his growth to intelligence shall require, these invading kings shall be overthrown, and Israel be rescued. Thus was the Messiah, yet to be born, *a sign*, not indeed to unwilling Ahaz, but to Israel, of her speedy deliverance and permanent preservation. Well and wisely, therefore, does the inspired evangelist, now that the Messiah is born, adduce this prophecy to show its fulfilment in him. The amount of the whole is, that the spirit of prophecy availed itself of the occasion of Ahaz's unbelief, to utter and leave on record a striking prediction of the Incarnation.

They shall call his name Emmanuel—This name they are directed by God to give him; and there could be no reason with God to select this name but because (as noted on verse 21) its meaning denoted a reality. The person bears the name because he *is* what the name signifies As the Lord was called Jesus, saviour, because he *is* Saviour; and as he is called Christ, anointed, because he *is* the Anointed, so is he called Emmanuel, God-with-us, because he *is God with us*. He is God with man; he is Divinity with humanity. And he is called God with us because he is *virgin-born*, for the prophet conjoins these two facts as antecedent and result. That is, because he has only a human mother, and so a divine Father, therefore he is in name, and thereby in reality, *God with us*. No Jewish or Unitarian gloss can evade this. It demonstrates that Messiah is by birth, *God with us;* and therefore that he is so by person, by nature, and by substance.

25. *Till she had brought forth her first-born son*—These words assert the virginity of the mother of the Lord *until* the time of his birth. According to the Creed, "He was born of the virgin Mary." They are also understood by many to imply that she was subsequently the mother of other children than Jesus. On the other hand, the perpetual virginity of the blessed mother is a standard doctrine in the Roman Church, and is generally maintained by the older writers of the Christian Church. With many this opinion is mainly grounded upon what they consider the demands of our "pious feelings." It may be doubted, however, whether this pious feeling is not rather ecclesiastical and sentimental than Scriptural and truly spiritual.

The proof that Mary was the mother of subsequent children, is derived so far

as this passage is concerned, both from the word *until*, and the words *her firstborn*. From the word *until*, the implication is inferred that her virginity continued not after her maternity. And this we apprehend is the usual sense of the word *until* and its corresponding term in most languages. When we affirm a certain state of things *until* a given point, we *naturally* imply a change after that point. Yet not *necessarily*. We may intend our affirmation to cover the time previous to the point, without pretending to affirm, imply, or even know what took place after that point. Examples of this, quoted by Bishop Pearson on the Creed, are Gen. xxviii, 15; Deut. xxxiv, 6; 1 Sam. xv, 35; 2 Sam. vi, 23; Matt. xxviii, 20. The conclusion of this argument therefore fairly is, I think, that there is a decided *probability*, although no full *certainty*, that the evangelist meant to imply the birth of subsequent children. As to the word *firstborn*, it is affirmed by Pearson and others that the word is in the Old Testament properly applied to the *only born*. That is, it is applied to any child whose birth has been preceded by no other, whether succeeded by any or not. The Mosaic law prescribed the sanctification of the "firstborn." Exod. xii, 2. And this firstborn was still so called, whether succeeded by subsequent children or not. This is undoubtedly true. But still it may be questioned whether a subsequent historian would style that child the firstborn where there was notoriously no second born. The evangelist could, I think, do so only by transferring himself, as it were, to the time of the birth, when the future contingency was unknown. Therefore, the balance of the argument upon this point also leaves an implication against the perpetual virginity of the blessed mother. This question is connected with the further discussion of the question concerning *the brethren of the Lord*. Upon that point see our note upon Matt. xiii, 55.

In closing our notes upon this chapter, we offer the following remarks:

1. The style of the evangelist is eminently prosaic and plain. There is not the slightest tinge of poetry in the whole narrative. There is nothing of the fabulous or mythical strain. He narrates the most wonderful events without the slightest wonder. The whole tone of the style is purely historical, as plain and level as if it detailed the most ordinary events of life.

2. Matthew, thus far, gives neither date nor place. The persons are named without formal introduction. All are assumed to be familiar to his readers. As if writing to Jewish Christians, to whom all the facts, persons, and places are well known, he appears to write rather as if to verify and record than to inform.

3. In his first two chapters, Matthew so plans his narrative as, by blending fact with prophecy, to prove the Messiahship of Jesus. He is careful to inform us that these events took place for the purpose (in addition to all their other purposes) of fulfilling the predictions of the prophets of the Old Testament. The New Testament is born of the Old. The Gospel is contained in the law. The old dispensation is but a preparation for the new. He who is the true Jew is bound to be the believing Christian.

4. Matthew gives no dates, but his mention of historical names, such as Herod and Archelaus, enables us to fix, with some approach to accuracy, the time of our Lord's birth. The following extract, from Prof. Robinson's English Harmony of the New Testament, furnishes the best statement upon this point:

"The precise year of our Lord's birth is uncertain. Several data, however exist, by which an approximation may be made, sufficiently accurate to show that our present Christian era is not entirely correct.

"1. According to Matt. ii, 1–6, Jesus was born during the lifetime of Herod the Great, and not long before his death. Herod died in the year of Rome (A. U.) 750, just before the passover; see Josephus, Ant., b. 17, ch. 8, sec. 1; ib., b. 17, ch. 9, sec. 3. This has been verified by calculating the eclipse of the moon,

which happened just before his death; (Jos., Ant., b. 17, ch. 6, sec. 4. Ideler, *Handb. of Chronol.*, vol. ii, p. 391 sq.) If now we make an allowance of time for the purification, the visit of the Magi, the flight into Egypt, and the remaining there till Herod was dead, for all of which not less than six months can well be required, it follows that the birth of Christ cannot in any case be fixed later than the autumn of A. U. 749.

"2 Another note of time occurs in Luke iii, 1, 2, where John the Baptist is said to have entered upon his ministry in the fifteenth year of Tiberius; and again in Luke iii, 23, where Jesus is said to have been 'about thirty years of age' at his baptism. Now if both John and Jesus, as is quite probable, entered upon their ministry at the age of thirty, in accordance with the Levitical custom, (Num. iv, 3, 35, 39, 43, 47,) then by reckoning back thirty years we may ascertain the year of John's birth, and of course also that of Jesus. Augustus died Aug. 29, A. U. 767; and was succeeded by Tiberius, who had already been associated with him in the government for at least two years, and probably three. If now we reckon from the death of Augustus, the fifteenth year of Tiberius commenced Aug. 29, A. U. 781; and going back thirty years, we find that John must have been born not earlier than August, A. U. 751, and our Lord of course not earlier than A. U. 752, a result disagreeing with that obtained from Matthew by three years. If, on the other hand, we reckon from the time when Tiberius was admitted as co-regent of the empire, which is shown to have been certainly as early as A. U. 765, and probably in A. U. 764; then the fifteenth year of Tiberius began in A. U. 778, and it follows that John may have been born in A. U. 748, and our Lord in A. U. 749. In this way the results obtained from Matthew and Luke are more nearly coincident.

"3. A third note of time is derived from John ii, 20: 'Forty and six years was this temple in building.' Josephus says in one place that Herod began to build the temple in the eighteenth year of his reign, while in another he specifies the fifteenth year. (Ant., b. 15, ch. 11, sec. 1; Wars, b. 1, ch 21, sec. 1.) He also assigns the length of Herod's reign at thirty-seven or thirty four years; according as he reckons from his appointment by the Romans, or from the death of Antigonus. (Ant., b. 17, ch. 8, sec. 1; Wars, b. 1, ch. 33, sec. 8.) Herod was first declared king of Judea in A. U. 714; (Jos. Ant., b. 14, ch. 14, sec. 4, 5; Wars, b. 1, ch. 14, sec. 4; comp. Ant., b. 14, ch. 16, sec. 4. Ideler, *Handb. of Chron.*, ii, 390;) hence the eighteenth year of his reign, when Herod began to rebuild the temple, would coincide with A. U. 732; and our Lord's first passover, in the forty-seventh year following, would fall in A. U. 779. If now our Lord at that time was thirty and a half years of age, as is probable, this would carry back the year of his birth to the autumn of A. U. 748.

"4. Further, according to a tradition preserved by the Latin Fathers of the first five centuries, our Lord's death took place during the consulate of the two Gemini, C. Rubellius and C. Fufius; that is, in A. U. 782. So Tertullian, Lactantius, Augustine, etc. (See Tertull. adv. Jud., sec. 8; Augustin. de Civ. Dei, xviii, 54.) If now the duration of his ministry was three and a half years, then, as before, the year of his birth would be carried back to the autumn of A. U. 748.

"5. Some modern writers, taking into account the abode in Egypt, and also the 'two years' of Matt. ii, 16, have supposed that Jesus must have been from two to three years old at Herod's death, and hence they assume that he was born in A. U. 747. The same year, A. U. 747, is also fixed upon as the date of Christ's birth by those who regard the star in the east as having been the conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, which occurred in that year. So Keppler, Münter, Ideler, *Handb. of Chronol.*, Berlin, 1826.

"From all these data it would appear, that while our Lord's birth cannot have taken place later than A. U. 749, it *may* nevertheless have occurred one or two years earlier.

CHAPTER II.

NOW when [a] Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men [b] from the east to Jerusalem,

a Luke 2. 4. 6. 7.

b Gen. 10. 30; 25, 6; 1 Kings 4. 30.

"The present Christian era, which was fixed by the abbot Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century, assumes the year of Christ's birth as coincident with A. U. 754. It follows then, from the preceding statements, that this our common era begins in any case *more than four years too late;* that is, from *four to five years*, at the least, after the actual birth of Christ. This era was first used in historical works by the venerable Bede, early in the eighth century; and was not long after introduced in public transactions by the Frank kings Pepin and Charlemagne."

CHAPTER II.

§ 13.—Coming of the Magi, 1–10.

1. *In Bethlehem of Judea*—Called in the Old Testament Bethlehem-Judah, to distinguish it from Bethlehem of the tribe of Zebulun. The name Bethlehem anciently signified *the town* or *house of bread;* in modern Arabic it seems to signify the *house* or *place of flesh.*

Bethlehem was noted as the scene of the Book of Ruth; and at this day, as then, the fields of wheat abound, and the reaper is accustomed to leave a remnant for the gleaner, who is often a maiden like Ruth. It was still more noted as the birthplace of David, who here spent his boyhood, and from hunting the bear and the lion in the neighbouring caves and gorges, grew up to be a warrior against wicked men. But its chief note arises from its being the birthplace of David's illustrious descendant, the Lord Jesus, whose birth the evangelist is now narrating.

Bethlehem is situated upon the summit of the hill country of Judea, from which it commands an extensive prospect eastward toward Jordan, and westward toward the Mediterranean. It is about six miles south of Jerusalem, on the road toward Hebron. It contains at the present time about 4,000 inhabitants, chiefly Christians of the Greek Church, who obtain much of their subsistence from the sale of relics to pilgrims and visitors. A cave is shown as the place in which the birth of the Saviour occurred. But there is little reason to suppose from the sacred narratives that the birthplace was a cave. The Church of the Nativity, which marks the traditional spot, is a venerable piece of architecture, built probably by the Empress Helena.

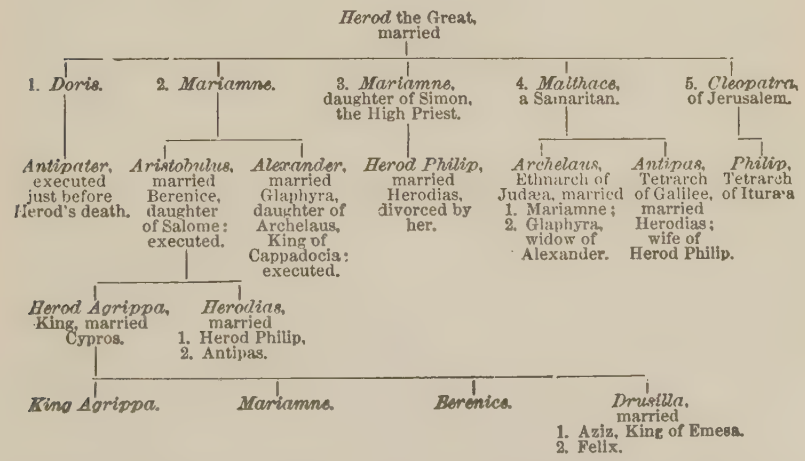
Judea—Palestine, as lying between the Mediterranean on the west, and Jordan, with its lakes or seas, upon the east, was divided into three provinces, Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. Of these three, Judea was the most southerly. It lay mainly between the Dead Sea and Mediterranean. The name Judea is derived from the patriarch Judah, to whose tribe a large share of the territory belonged. It is the scene of the most important events of old Jewish history. Most of our Saviour's ministry transpired in Galilee. But points of intense interest in his ministry, as well as the solemn close of his earthly mission, took place at the celebrated capital of Judea, Jerusalem.

The surface of Judea is distinguished into *hill-country*, *valley*, and *plain*. The *mountain*, or *hill-country of Judea*, was that broad back of mountains which cuts the centre of the country from Hebron northward to beyond Jerusalem. The *plain* was the low country extending toward the coast of the Mediterranean. The *vale* is defined as extending from Engedi to Jericho, and appears to have included such parts of the Ghor, or great plain of the Jordan, as lay within the territory of Judea. That which is called the wilderness of Judea was the wild and inhospitable region lying eastward of Jerusalem, in the direction of the Jordan and Dead Sea.

Herod the king—In our note on chapter i, 17, we slightly traced the history

of the last fourteen generations of the Jewish nation to the time of Herod, called, or rather miscalled the Great, in the closing part of whose reign the Messiah was born. This Herod was the son of Antipater, a distinguished Idumean general, who, by his own bravery and the favour of the Romans, had obtained supreme power over his native Idumea, and great authority in Judea. At the early age of fifteen, Herod was placed in command in Galilee, where he distinguished himself by his bravery, talent, and personal popularity. By these same qualities and the favour of the Romans he became king of Judea, a term which embraced all Palestine. As he advanced in age he became suspicious, cruel, and extremely bloodthirsty. He put to death his beautiful wife, the celebrated Mariamne, the illustrious descendant of the line of Maccabean princes. His two sons also by Mariamne, the innocent and accomplished favourites of the nation, he sent to execution. His last son, Antipater, he ordered to be slain five days before his own death. As he saw his end approaching, he ordered a large number of the most illustrious citizens to be executed as soon as he had breathed his last, in order, as he said, that there might be mourning at his death. But the commands of a dead tyrant possess little authority, and this ferocious order was never executed. Amid the wholesale murders committed by this bloody despot, the slaughter of a few infants in Bethlehem would be but a drop in the ocean, too slight for general history to mention.

Herod married ten wives, by five of whom there was posterity, including persons mentioned in the New Testament. The careless reader finds the name of Herod repeated in the Scriptures, and is apt to imagine that it is *always the same person.* He forgets that the first Herod died during the infancy of Jesus. The following diagram will show, so far as is necessary for our purpose, how they were connected with Herod the Great, and with each other:


Herod the Great, married
1. *Doris.*
2. *Mariamne.*
3. *Mariamne,* daughter of Simon, the High Priest.
4. *Malthace,* a Samaritan.
5. *Cleopatra,* of Jerusalem.
Antipater, executed just before Herod's death.
Aristobulus, married Berenice, daughter of Salome: executed.
Alexander, married Glaphyra, daughter of Archelaus, King of Cappadocia: executed.
Herod Philip, married Herodias, divorced by her.
Archelaus, Ethnarch of Judæa, married 1. Mariamne; 2. Glaphyra, widow of Alexander.
Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, married Herodias; wife of Herod Philip.
Philip, Tetrarch of Ituræa
Herod Agrippa, King, married Cypros.
Herodias, married 1. Herod Philip, 2. Antipas.
King Agrippa.
Mariamne.
Berenice.
Drusilla, married 1. Aziz, King of Emesa. 2. Felix.

Wise men—In the original, *Magi.* The *Magi*, according to the best accounts, were, in a very early antiquity, a tribe among the ancient Medes, similar to the Levites among the Hebrews. That is, they were a priestly tribe, or learned class in the nation. The word is derived by some from the old Pehlvic term *mog*, which signifies priest. The word probably forms the root of our words *mag*nates, *magi*strate, *mas*ter, and even *mis*ter. It is found in the Latin, *mag*nus, and the Greek, *μέγας* After the union of the Median and Per

sian empire, the Magian class obtained great ascendancy in Persia. Subsequently they appear in great power in Babylon. The chief Magian is mentioned in Jer. xxxix, 3, under the title of Rab-Mag. The prophet Daniel probably filled the office of chief Magian in his day. It may be thence inferred that the true religion, with greater or less purity, may have existed with at least a part of this class. Hence we need not wonder that from this class there should come a number to Jerusalem, under divine inspiration and guidance, to seek the new-born Messiah.

After the time of Christ, Magianism, like the religions of Greece and Rome, waned and sunk into discredit. In this condition of decay we find Simon Magus, or Simon the Magian. From the word Magi is derived the word magic; and thus in process of time this illustrious class sunk to the rank of magicians, sorcerers, and wandering fortune-tellers. Their mode of divination was by astrology, dream interpretation, and soothsaying with cups. The books of sorcery burned at Ephesus by the converted Christians, as related in the Acts of the Apostles, doubtless contained the false science of these pretenders.

From the east—It is very probable that Matthew was not informed from what particular country the Magi came. The event was early in the history of our Lord, and great as was the excitement produced by their coming, the common people would but vaguely know from what region in the East they came; and when the transaction passed off, and seemed to come to nothing, it would be very much forgotten. The Jewish writers use the phrase *the East* very extensively and vaguely. Thus, "unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, *eastward, unto the east country*" Gen. xxv, 6. Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the *east country*. It seems probable that the wise men came from Persia, the primitive land of the Magi. We know that the Persian Magi believed in a Messiah or future Saviour, (whom they called Sosiosch,) who should in the latter day appear and renew the world in righteousness. These views they may have directly derived from the primitive promise in Eden by their own tradition; or they may have had original revelations from God; or they may have learned much from the Jews in the captivity. Who knows how much of a real, acceptable faith and piety there was among them?

Jerusalem—This is the first occurrence of the name of the Holy City in the New Testament. Jerusalem is not only one of the most celebrated, but one of the most ancient cities in the world It is first mentioned in Genesis, under the name of Salem, with Melchisedek for its king, a type of the future Messiah. It was to this same spot that Abraham brought Isaac to be sacrificed, namely, upon the very mountain where Christ, the antitype of Isaac, was sacrificed ages afterward. When the land of Canaan was invaded under Joshua, the Jebusites held possession of Mount Zion in spite of every effort to dislodge them. David, however, at a later time, conquered Mount Zion from the Jebusites, and it became the City of David, the place of his palace, the abode of the Tabernacle, the capital of the monarchy. From that time it underwent the various fortunes of the Jewish state until the time of Christ. Here Christ was nationally rejected, and, according to prophecy, was put to death. About forty years afterward the city was taken after one of the severest struggles in history; the inhabitants were slaughtered, and the city destroyed. The Jewish state was overthrown; the sacrifices were abolished; the tribes were scattered, and still remain in dispersion among the various nations of the world. But, though scattered, they are not destroyed. Like the bush of Moses, they are burned, but not consumed. Other nations rise and perish, but Israel seems indestructible. He is reserved through ages, for purposes known to God alone.

2 Saying, [c]Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen [d]his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

c Luke 2. 11.

d Num. 24. 17; Isa. 60. 3.

2. *King of the Jews*—If these Magi were indeed Gentiles, they were fully indoctrinated into the understanding that the future Saviour was to be a *Jew* and *a king of the Jews*. They came in quest of a Jewish Messiah.

Have seen his star in the east—A close inspection of the words will, perhaps, disperse some gratuitous impressions: 1. The star did not stand over Jerusalem. Otherwise it would have been as visible to the Jews as to them; and they would not have said, "We have seen his star *in the east;*" that is, we in the east saw his star; but they would have said, "Yonder is his star in the firmament." The star very plainly was not at that moment visible to the Magi, and for that reason they were inquiring his place. 2. There is no proof that the star *guided them* on their way from their own country *to Jerusalem*. At Jerusalem they only affirm that they *saw* his star when they were *in the east*, before they started; not that they were guided on the way, or see it now. 3. It is plain that this star is no ordinary member of the firmament. It is *his* star, and not *a* star that existed *independently* of him.

Now we are not informed how they learned the *star* was *his*. At any rate, some divine revelation must have been given with the star. The angels who appeared to the shepherds explained themselves verbally; the Divine giver of *his* star no doubt explained it by *words*, or by *prophetic impulse*, to be *his*.

And now what was *the star?* To this some have answered that it was a conjunction of planets, which astronomy shows to have taken place at that time; and which, to the eye, would appear as one very luminous star. The Magi saw this, and, influenced by the expectation derived from prophecy, then widely existing through the East, that Messiah was soon to be born, they started for Jerusalem to make inquiry. No commentator states this theory more plausibly than Alford. But it fails to meet the facts. How could such a star reappear (see comment on ver. 9, 10) on their way toward Bethlehem, *go before them*, and indicate the very "*house*" (ver. 11) where the young child was?

There is then left us but one plain view of this star. It was *a luminous orb*, divinely and specially given, and divinely explained, as a signal of the Saviour's birth. It is called *a star* from its visible form. Just as the angels are called men, because they were men by form though not by nature, so this orb is called a star, because though not so by nature, it is by form.

The submission of the Jews to Jesus was typified by the shepherds; the submission of the Gentiles by the Magi. The former were informed by angels; the latter by a star.

This was perhaps the *star* seen in prophetic vision by the Gentile Balaam, as being far distant from himself in time: "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a STAR out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel." Num. xxiv, 17. And by the coming of the Magi was fulfiled in type, "the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. lx, 3. These Magi were as the ambassadors of the Gentile nations. *To worship him*—As king and Saviour.

3. *Herod . . . was troubled*—It was a bold and alarming question put by these new comers. It would have been treason to the reigning king if there were not some superhuman authority in it. No wonder the reigning house is *troubled* by the rise of another king, armed with an omnipotent authority! *All Jerusalem*—It was strange that while the Messiah was born not six miles off, Jerusalem gets her first news from strar

4 And when he had gathered all [e] the chief priests and [f] scribes of the people together, [g] he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 [h] And thou Bethlehem, *in*

e 2 Chron. 36. 14.—*f* 2 Chron. 34. 13.

g Mal. 2. 7.—*h* Mic. 5. 2; John 7. 42.

gers coming from, perhaps, a thousand miles distance! And no wonder the city is excited through all its depths.

4. *All the chief priests and scribes*—The deep alarm of Herod is manifested by the greatness of the convocation he calls. The chief priest was properly but one; but the title is extended to include his deputy and the heads of the twenty-four courses. *Scribes*—The word scribe signifies a writer, and was originally used to designate one of the class in the tribe of Levi who performed the office of secretary, recorder, roll-keeper, or transcriber. Seraiah was scribe or secretary to King David. 2 Sam. viii, 17. Elihoreph and Ahiah were secretaries to King Solomon. 1 Kings iv, 3. Under Uzziah, king of Judah, Jeil, the scribe, kept the muster-roll of the army. 2 Chron. xxvi, 11. So Ezra was a ready scribe in the law of Moses. Ezra vii, 6.

The scribes of the New Testament belonged to the class of which Ezra was the model. They were transcribers of the text of the Mosaic law, and students and doctors of its principles. They were the same as the lawyers. A select number of these scribes, as well as of the Pharisees, was associated with the high priests to constitute the Sanhedrim, or supreme legislative body of the Jewish nation.

Where Christ should be born—By *Christ* here is meant not a proper name, but a title—the *Christ* or the *Messiah*. See note on Matt. i. 1. It is a profound, theological question, therefore, which King Herod puts to his spiritual advisers: Where, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, is the Messiah to be born? In the answer then given by this illustrious body, we have the decision of the Jewish nation on this point. Hence Tacitus, the celebrated Pagan historian, says: "With the masses the opinion was prevalent that it was predicted IN THE BOOKS OF THE PRIESTS, that the East should at that time grow strong." Which Suetonius, another Pagan Roman, confirms, and makes even more pointed: "Through all the East there prevailed an ancient and constant opinion that it was *contained in the fates* that at that time *those arising from Judea* should become *masters of human things*."

These testimonies prove, 1. That the expectations of an arising prodigy from Judea were then prevailing through the East. 2. That these expectations were founded on prophecy in the sacred books. 3. That the time for his coming was believed to be nigh at hand, the prophetic period being about accomplished. Finally, Herod, through his great Sanhedrim, has immediate access to these very *sacred books* which predict the very village where the Christ was to be born; just where our Jesus was born, in Bethlehem of Judea.

As a singular illustration of this whole subject, we quote the following:

"So vivid was their (the Chinese's) expectation of the Messiah—'the Great Saint who,' as Confucius says, 'was to appear in the West'—so fully sensible were they not only of the place of his birth, but *of the* TIME of his coming, that about sixty years after the birth of our Saviour they sent their envoys to hail the expected Redeemer. These envoys encountered on their way the missionaries of Boodhism coming from India—the latter announcing an incarnate God were taken to be the disciples of the true Christ, and were presented as such to their countrymen by the deluded ambassadors. Thus was this religion introduced into China." (Schlegel's Philosophy of History, i, 176.)

6. *And thou Bethlehem*—The New Testament quotations will often be found

the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, [1] that shall [1] rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had

i Rev. 2. 27.

1 Or, *feed.*

to vary from the passage in the Old. New Testament writers sometimes quoted the words of the Hebrew precisely; sometimes quoted the Septuagint or Greek translation, which was commonly read by the Jews of their day; and sometimes quoted substantially, with such variations as rendered the passage more clear, without misrepresenting the original divine mind in the passage.

This passage in the Old Testament reads thus: But thou, Bethlehem *Ephratah*, though *thou be little* among the *thousands* of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel. Micah v, 2. The evangelist leaves out Ephratah as a name now little known, and substitutes *land of Judah* as expressing the same limitation of the site of Bethlehem. *Though thou be little*, in the Hebrew, the evangelist changes to *art not the least;* for the smallness of the *external size* is mentioned by the Hebrew to imply its not being small *in divine favour*, as expressed by the evangelist. Matthew puts *princes*, or *rulers of a thousand apiece*, for the thousands themselves, which amounts to the same thing.

This is a most signal passage of prophecy, for many reasons, among which are the following: 1. It was the uniform practice of the ancient Jews, agreeing with Herod's Sanhedrim, to apply it to the Messiah. "All the Jewish interpreters," says Hengstenberg, "with the Chaldee at their head, (who paraphrase the closing part of the passage, 'from thee shall *the Messiah* go forth to me, before me,') maintain the application to the Messiah." But so fatal to their own cause has this proved that the modern Jews have been obliged to abandon their ancient interpretation!

2. This prophecy brings to a *point* a whole series of converging prophecies. First we have the Edenic prediction of the seed of the woman; it is narrowed to the line of Shem; next to the line of Abraham, to that of Isaac, Jacob, Judah, David, and finally to the city of David, Bethlehem.

3. This pointing to Bethlehem made more conspicuous the fact that Jesus was of the royal line of David. It pointed to the place where David spent his boyhood; and to the place where the record of the pedigree of Jesus was to be found, so completing the evidence presented in Matthew's genealogy. Moreover, of the two cities of David, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, the latter is selected as the starting place of both David and Jesus, each from a humble origin, the latter from the decayed line of the former.

4. And those who complain that the whole account of the Messiah's birth seems an obscure and humble matter, in a narrow corner of the world, unlike what an incarnation should be, should take into consideration how clear are the predictions that God would fling the vail over that transaction. See note on verse 23.

5. The predicted birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, of the line of David, and so of the tribe of Judah, settles the point that the Messiah *has come.* Not only was it predicted that Messiah should appear during the second temple, (which is now no more,) but the tribeship of Judah and the lineage of David are lost. All traces of the royal line disappeared at the fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of their race.

6. Finally, no infidel can say these prophecies were forged by Christians, or were made to suit the event, for the records are preserved by our opponents, the Jews. The Hebrews keep our library of proofs. Judaism furnishes the prophecy; Christianity furnishes the fulfilment; and how will infidelity explain the agreement?

7. *Privily*—Privately, because he

privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 ¶ And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, [j] they [2] presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God [k] in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were de-

j Psa. 72. 10; Isa. 60. 6.

2 Or, *offered.*— *k* Chap. 1. 20.

wished the excitement to die, and to keep the matter under his own control. *Called the wise men*—Who plainly were waiting to learn the locality of the Messiah, being not now directed by the visible star. *What time the star appeared*—In order to know the precise time of the birth.

8. *To Bethlehem*—The narratives of Matthew and Luke are usually harmonized on the somewhat doubtful view that they actually went to Bethlehem. The discussion belongs to notes on Luke. *Worship him also*—In his cool measures of consulting the Sanhedrim, guarding against excitement, and using the Magi, under false professions, Herod shows the wily craft of a politician, combined with the folly of supposing he can defeat the plans of God.

9. *Lo, the star*—The star re-appears. What star? The star, namely, *which they saw*, not at Jerusalem, nor on their way thither, but while they were *in the East*. *Went before them*—The starry form came so lowly from the skies as to move horizontally *before them*, and guide their steps. Whether visible to any other than themselves is not said. *Stood over*—So specifically and directly as to individualize the very house.

10. *When they saw the star*—Implying that it had before been *unseen*. *Rejoiced with exceeding great joy*—The strong terms show how great was the rapture at recovering sight of the lost star.

11. *Worshipped him*—Something more than human homage; for emphatically it was offered to *him*, and not to his mother, in whose arms he was. *Gold and frankincense*—The very sort of presents predicted in Isa. lx, 6: "All they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring *gold and incense*." This is a sample and type of the conversion of the Gentile nations to Christ. "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isa. lx, 3.

Incense, or frankincense, is a resinous gum, flowing from a tree, gashed for the purpose, growing in Arabia and Lebanon. *Myrrh* is also a gum obtained from a tree similar to the Acacia, growing in Arabia.

From the nature of these presents it has been argued that the Magi came from Arabia, the land which abundantly produces them; but this sort of wealth abounded through all the East. They were the kind of presents which it was customary to bring when admitted into the presence of princes or gods

parted, behold, [l]the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, [m]Out of Egypt have I called my son.

l Psa. 103. 20; Heb. 1. 14.

m Hosea 11. 1.

§ 13.—Return of Magi and Flight into Egypt, 12–15.

13. *The young child and his mother*—Not *thy wife and child.* They are to him a *charge* rather than *relatives.*

14. *By night*—That no informant may be able to indicate whither he has gone. *Departed into Egypt*—Colonies of Jews had for a long time existed and flourished in Egypt. A rival temple had there been built, and there the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, called the Septuagint, was made. It was, by the ordinary caravan road, but a few days' journey; the gifts of the Magi would furnish ample provision for the expenses, and doubtless there were relatives or friends in Egypt willing to receive them.

The flight to Egypt had three purposes: 1. The security of the child from his enemies. 2. To show the divine care and valuation of the holy child. 3. To make his childhood's sufferings an antitype to the history of chosen Israel. As Israel went down into Egypt and tarried there under compulsion of Pharaoh until his restoration to Canaan, so Jesus went down into Egypt and tarried under compulsion of Herod until restored to the Holy Land. Twice, then, out of Egypt did God call his son; namely, his collective son, Israel, and his individual son, Christ.

15. *By the prophet*—Hosea xi, 1. *Out of Egypt. . .son*—The passage quoted from the prophet is spoken of *Israel*, the people being personified as an individual. *When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.* A type is *a person or object divinely designed to prefigure a future character or object to which it bears designed resemblance.* The future object so prefigured is called the *antitype. Type* is therefore visible prediction, as *prophecy* is spoken prediction. Thus the sacrifices were divinely appointed *types* of the great atoning sacrifice of Christ. An entire *set* or combination of objects may be *typical* of an entire *set* of *antitypical* objects. The objects may resemble, and the principle which connects the objects of the combination may be the same in both *sets.* Thus here we have of type and antitype, then, two sets:

1. Pharaoh,	Israel,	Egypt,	Canaan.
2. Herod,	Christ,	Egypt,	Palestine.

The individuals of each couplet are similar or same, and the relation connecting the individuals of each set is the same. So Israel is a *type* of the Church, and Christ's infantile history is a type of his Messianic history, as his Messianic history is a type of the Church. Thus:

Adversary,	*Righteous One,*	*Trial,*	*Restoration.*
1. Pharaoh,	Israel,	Egypt,	Canaan.
2. Herod,	Christ,	Egypt,	Palestine.
3. Satan,	Christ,	World,	Glory.
4. Satan,	Church,	World,	Heaven.

When the Old Testament designedly uses words which describe the typical points in the type, those words *will describe the future antitype.* It thereby becomes *prediction,* which is fulfilled in the antitype. Thus the words, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," describe the typical point which Israel bears to Christ. It is therefore a prediction which is fulfilled in Christ.

So God's dispensations do repeat and

16 ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, [n] and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by [o] Jeremy the prophet, saying,

18 In [p] Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning,

n Gen. 49. 7; 2 Kin. 8. 12; Prov. 28. 15, 17; Isa. 26. 21; Hosea 10. 14; Rev. 17. 6.

o Jer. 31. 15.
p Jer. 31. 15.

reproduce similar sets of types and antitypes in continuity. In printer's phrase, the *type* continually produces the same set of words and paragraphs, through successive pages and editions. In the present case, Christ's infant history was so framed as to be brought into antitypical relation; and *the words of the prophet were so framed as to predict the antitype Christ in describing the type Israel.* The inspiration that enabled the prophet to *utter*, enabled the evangelist to *explain* the prediction.

As Israel was God's chosen among the nations, so Christ was God's chosen among men. Reciprocally, as Christ was his Son, so Israel was his son. Both are his firstborn. So Exod. iv, 22: "Israel is my son, even my firstborn." In Isa. xlix, 3, the words, "Thou art my servant, O Israel," are spoken of the Messiah. So the Jewish rabbis have recognized the Scripture doctrine that Israel is type of Messiah. This typeism between Israel and Christ and the Church arises from the fact of their sameness of relation to God, as being objects of divine favour, representatives of righteousness in a world of trial, under pressure of the adversary, yet destined to victory; as we have exhibited in the parallels above.

§ 13.—Slaughter of the Innocents, and Return from Egypt, 16–23.

16. *Mocked*—Slighted and deceived. *Wroth*—Angry. *Slew*—Herod believed the prophecy, for he ordered the sacred records to be consulted, with the expectation that they would tell, and tell truly, where the Messiah would be born. He believed the Scripture; he believed in the Messiah. But what a believer! He imagined that he could kill the predicted Messiah, and so defeat the God of ages! Such idiots may the most crafty men make of themselves, when blinded by ambition. *All the children*—Male children. Many imagine that the number was immense; but the number of male children under two years old in a small village and its adjacent country borders could not be large. *Coasts*—The original word signifies not *sea coasts*, but suburbs, land borders.

There is no force in the modern objection to the truth of the history of the massacre of the infants, derived from the fact that no secular historian of that day mentions it. Amid the enormous slaughters perpetrated by this monster, the killing of a few children in a country village would hardly be thought worthy of notice by any pagan author. See our remarks on Herod in our notes upon verse 1.

18. *In Ramah*—Rama was a village in the tribe of Benjamin, near Bethlehem. *Rachel weeping*—Rachel was the wife of Jacob, or Israel, and died "in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." (See Gen. xxxv, 19; xlviii, 7.) When the Babylonian captivity took place, Rama was the rendezvous where the Jews were assembled to be carried away. The prophet describes this by the beautiful passage (Jer. xxxi, 15, 16) here quoted. Rachel, the ancestral mother of Israel, is represented as weeping over the loss of her captured and murdered children. In this the evangelist finds a typical resemblance to the martyrdom of the children by Herod.

Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

19 ¶ But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

20 Saying, [q] Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: [r] for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in

[q] Jer. 31. 15.

[r] Exod. 4. 19.

A beautiful illustration of this personification of captured Israel as a female is found in several ancient medals, still extant, in which a mourning female figure is stamped with the pathetic inscription, *Judea capta.*

The typical principles are the same as in verse 15. Only there it is *paternal* Israel, and here it is *maternal.* There the father of the nation represents the nation, and here, his wife, the mother of tribes. Israel, or Judea, is here a woman. And as in the prophetic passage in Jeremiah, when fully quoted, there is a promised restoration for the hapless national Rachel, so in this case a triumph is shadowed for the maternal mourner.

They are not—Equivalent to our phrase, *They are no more.* They are borne away into slavery. To their weeping mother they are *to all intents and purposes dead.*

20. *They are dead*—Words quoted from Exod. iv, 19, where they are applied to Pharaoh the type of Herod. Our Lord's stay in Egypt could have not been many months in duration

22. *When he heard that Archelaus did reign*—He heard this first after he had reached the *land of Israel*, that is, the southwestern border of Palestine. He knew the death of Herod by revelation in Egypt.

Archelaus was the son of Herod the Great, by his fourth wife, Malthace. After Herod had slain his three sons, Aristobulus, Alexander, and Antipater, he left by will his dominions to Archelaus as king. Upon the death of Herod, Archelaus was proclaimed king by the populace. but did not dare assume the crown until his title should be confirmed by the Emperor of Rome. Thereupon the Jews sent a solemn embassy to the emperor, petitioning that they might be exempted from the reign of any of Herod's family, and that Judea might be governed as a Roman province, under the governor of Syria. The emperor, having heard the representations of all parties, appointed Archelaus not king, but ethnarch, that is, (in the Greek language,) nation-ruler, promising him the title of king, provided he should prove a good ruler. But the cruelty of the father was inherited by the son. Archelaus, after a reign of nine years, was deposed by the emperor at the suit of the Jewish people, and banished to Vienna, in Gaul, where he died. It is therefore very consistent with history, that when the parents of Jesus learned that Archelaus reigned in the stead of his father Herod, they should avoid his dominions, turn aside to Galilee, and make their abode in Nazareth.

It seems singular that Matthew has not thus far alluded to Nazareth by name, although we plentifully know by

the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside [s]into the parts of Galilee:

23 And he came and dwelt in a city called [t]Nazareth:

s Chap. 3. 13; Luke 2. 39.

t John 1. 45.

Luke that Nazareth was the home of the Holy Family before the flight to Egypt. Some think Matthew was not aware of the fact, which is hardly possible. But as Matthew wrote for Jews, it is more probable that he omits it because it was so well known. See concluding remarks of chapter i, par. 2.

Archelaus had as great a reputation for oppression as his cruel father. Herod Antipas, his brother, was ruler in Galilee. Thereby our Saviour's residence was transferred to a scene predicted by the prophecies of the Old Testament.

Afraid to go thither—Some think that they would have gone thither because they had a residence in Bethlehem. This is disproved from the fact that Mary had not even an acquaintance to afford her a lodging at an exigency when any friend would have made a sacrifice to accommodate her. But they had relatives in Judea, (Luke i, 36, 39, 40;) Judah was their hereditary tribe, and Jerusalem might seem the suitable place for the young heir of David. These facts can surely explain their apparent disposition to settle in Judea. *Galilee*—Was the northern one of the three great divisions of Palestine. The word signifies *circuit.* The province consisted of a mixed population of Jews and Gentiles, and so was much despised by the purer Jews of Judea.

23. *A city called Nazareth*—Though Matthew wrote for Jewish readers, familiar with Nazareth, his words seem to imply the contrary. This we shall soon explain. *Nazareth*—A small village embosomed in a valley in the southwestern part of Galilee. It was very obscure; it is not mentioned in the Old Testament. According to Hengstenberg, its name is derived from the Hebrew word *Netzer*, signifying a *branch;* or rather *sprout*, or *germ;* the place being so called from its insignificance. Its fame has solely risen from the residence of the Saviour there. Indeed, the place is a fit emblem of him. Beginning from a germ, it has risen to a tree in fame, and will fill the earth.

Stanley gives the following account of Nazareth:

"It is one peculiarity of the Galilean hills, as distinct from those of Ephraim or Judah, that they contain or sustain green basins of table-land just below their topmost ridges. Such above all is NAZARETH. Fifteen gently rounded hills 'seem as if they had met to form an enclosure' for this peaceful basin; 'they rise round it like the edge of a shell to guard it from intrusion. It is a rich and beautiful field' in the midst of these green hills, abounding in gay flowers, in fig-trees, small gardens, hedges of the prickly pear; and the dense, rich grass affords an abundant pasture. The village stands on the steep slope of the southwestern side of the valley.

"From the crest of the hills which thus screen it, especially from that called 'Nebi-Said,' or 'Ismail,' on the western side, is one of the most striking views in Palestine. There are Tabor, with its rounded dome, on the northeast, Hermon's white top in the distant north, Carmel and the Mediterranean Sea to the west, a conjunction of those three famous mountains, probably unique in the views of Palestine. And in the nearer prospect, there are the uplands in which Nazareth itself stands, its own circular basin behind it; on the west, enclosed by similar hills overhanging the plain of Acre, lies the town of Sepphorieh, the Roman capital. On the south and southeast lies the broad plain of Esdraelon, overhung by the high pyramidal hill which, as the highest point of the Nazareth range, and thus the most conspicuous to travelers approaching from the plain has received, though without any his-

that it might be fulfilled [u] **which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.**

u Judg. 13. 5; 1 Sam. 1. 11.

torical ground, the name of the 'Mount of Precipitation.' These are the natural features which for nearly thirty years met the almost daily view of Him who 'increased in wisdom and stature' within this beautiful seclusion. It is the seclusion which constitutes its peculiarity and its fitness for these scenes of the Gospel history. Unknown and unnamed in the Old Testament, Nazareth first appears as the retired abode of the humble carpenter. Its separation from the busy world may be the ground, as it certainly is an illustration, of the evangelist's play on the word, 'He shall be called a Nazarene.' Its wild character, high up in the Galilean hills, may account both for the roughness of its population, unable to appreciate their own Prophet; and for the evil reputation which it had acquired even in the neighbouring villages, one of whose inhabitants, Nathaniel of Cana, said, 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' There, secured within the natural barrier of the hills, was passed that youth, of which the most remarkable characteristic is its absolute obscurity; and thence came the name of NAZARENE, used of old by the Jews, and used still by Mussulmans, as the appellation of that despised sect which has now embraced the civilized world."

Spoken by the prophets—Not by any *one* prophet in express terms, but by several of *the prophets*, in general substance.

He shall be called a Nazarene—The name of Nazarene was but another word for *despised one*. Hence, although no prophet has ever said anything of the word Nazarene, yet all those prophecies describing the Messiah as a *despised one* are fulfilled in his being a *Nazarene*.

Such is the ordinary interpretation, and we concur in it; and the reader is welcome to consider it sufficient. But we are convinced, in spite of the denial of most commentators, that, as Hengstenberg has shown, something more than this is intended. The Hebrew word for Nazareth was Netzer, a *branch*, or rather *germ*. Matthew wrote for Hebrews, and in his Hebrew the sentence would read thus: *He dwelt in a city called Germ, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, saying, he shall be called a Germ, or Germinal One.* Thereby would be fulfilled all that cluster of prophecies in which the Hebrew name Netzer, Branch or Germ, or its near synonym, is applied to Messiah. Thus, Zech. vi, 12: *Behold the man whose name is Branch*, or *Germ*. The term in prophecy is expressive of the slender origin of the Messiah. This whole circle of prophecies, indeed, is embraced in this of Isaiah xi, 1: *There shall come forth a rod from the fallen stem of Jesse and* (Netzer,) *a branch* (germ) *from his roots shall bear fruit.* That is, from the decayed family stock of David, a feeble *sprout* shall put forth and grow to great final power. A prophecy this by which the evangelical history is wonderfully confirmed. Humble, obscure, and, as it seems to some, mean as the Gospel origin appears, it is by that very fact a fulfilment of stupendous prophecies. In support of this view we may remark:

1. There is a class of *name-predictions* in Scripture, of which this is a just specimen. Thus Isaiah gives his sons predictive names, (Isa. viii, 3, 18; vii, 3,) which are fulfilled. Melchisedek is a type of Christ by being "King of Salem, that is, King of Peace." This last is a precisely similar case. Salem, signifying peace, is, like Netzer, a topographical divine name-prediction of Christ's prophetic character.

2. This interpretation makes the evangelist affirm that there was a divinely intended correspondence in name between the name of the city Netzer and Christ's prophetic appellative Netzer: and that *to mark this correspondence*, Providence directed that *the living Netzer* should have his residence in *the vil*

lage Netzer. Thus would the popular attention be drawn to the prophecy and to its fulfilment.

3. The fulfilment does not stop at the mere name. Nazareth is called a germ from its insignificance; yet it shall, through him, fill the earth with its importance. So it is an emblem of Him, the living Nazareth, who at first is but a Germ, but shall fill the earth with his glory. And as there is a correspondence in the name and thing, so they both continue to fulfil the prophetic predictions of the Netzer, so that there is a triple prophetic cord.

4. By this wise plan of combining an external and audible fulfilment (so customary in prophecy) with the written one, a broad publicity is given to the great fact. It is transferred from the hidden books to the open land, and infused into the common speech. Providence has written a notice of the prophecy on the surface of the earth, as on a map, by the name of Nazareth, and has noted its fulfilment by placing Jesus, the germinal Netzer, there. And he has so contrived that every time a Jew speaks of Jesus as the Netzer, or Nazarene, he reminds himself of a fulfilled prophecy.

5. This view confirms the interpretation which finds in the name Nazarene a symbol of humble origin. Nathaniel's question, Can any good come out of Nazareth? shows that as Galilee was the odium of Palestine, so Nazareth was the odium even of Galilee.

6. We now may see the true import of the phrase beginning this verse, *a city called Nazareth.* It implies not that the city was new to Matthew's readers, for that was not the fact. It implies that Jesus was divinely directed to inhabit a city called by that *name*, in order that a *name*-prediction might be fulfilled. It so demonstrates our interpretation. The meaning, then, would be: He came to a city called Netzer that by being himself called a Netzer, the prophecies which predict him as a Netzer might be evidently verified. Or: He came to a city called Germ, that the prophecies which, for substance, predict him as a Germ, may be fulfilled in his very name, as well as condition.

Finally, it is worthy to be observed what a number of name-predictions concur in our Lord, as threads to a common knot. As his name Jesus asserts that he is a predicted Saviour, and antitype to Joshua, the bringer of his people to Canaan; as his appellative, Christ, declares him the end of all the Messianic prophecies; as his name Emmanuel proclaims him the Incarnate One of the Edenic prophecy and all ancient expectation, so his civic appellation Netzer, Nazarene, Branch, Germ, reminds us of a whole cluster of germinal prophecies, while the very spot in which he dwells is a type of the very points which the name designates. And finally, the prevalence of that appellation compels men, Jew or Gentile, the world over, to utter a perpetual reminder to themselves of the prophetic fulfilment. Pity if commentators should take much pains to obscure the reminder.

CHAPTER III.

§ 15.—Coming and Ministry of John the Baptist, 1–13.

1. *In those days*—The days in which our Saviour dwelt at Nazareth, as is detailed in the last chapter.

Yet between the two chapters an interval of near thirty years has transpired. The infant Saviour has grown to manhood, and the period when the main work of his mission must be accomplished has arrived. His reputed father, Joseph, after living for some years as a carpenter at Nazareth, had died. His maternal brothers and sisters had grown up around him. The prodigies which attended his birth had almost passed from memory. His younger brothers, ignorant of the occurrence, doubted his claims to the Messiahship. His mother almost alone retained the remembrance undimmed; so that when the time for his first miracle arrived (John ii, 3) she erred, not by want of faith, but by impatience for the mighty work.

Why did the brethren of our Lord, and his Nazarene townsmen, not recognize in his perfection of childhood his

CHAPTER III.

IN those days came [a] John the Baptist, preaching [b] in the wilderness of Judea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for [c] the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was

[a] Mark 1. 4; Luke 3. 2, 3; John 1. 28. [b] Josh. 14. 10.— [c] Dan. 2. 44; chap. 4. 17; 10. 7.

divine nature? This is not wonderful. It is probable that his innocent goodness appeared tame and insipid to their depraved tastes. It attracted less notice than the flaring smartness of many a boyish genius, or the precocity of any boyish bully. The sinless man was despised and rejected; no wonder the sinless child. Of the personal appearance of Jesus, not the slightest description is given in the New Testament. Pictures of him were in existence as early as the fourth century; but they are rather representatives of the ideal of Jesus in the mind of a man of pictorial genius, than an authentic likeness of his person.

Came—The evangelist says not that John *lived;* or that he *appeared* or flourished; but emphatically he *came.* The beginning of the explanation of the word is found in chap. xvii, 10–13, where our Lord declares that John the Baptist is Elias (Elijah) that should *come.* And by this we are referred to the fourth chapter of Malachi, which chapter should be well studied, in connection with the history of Elijah the prophet, by all who would get the key to the character of John. For John was the antitype of Elias, and in him Mal. iv, 5 was fulfilled.

John the Baptist—His miraculous birth, with its attendant wonders, is narrated by Luke, chap. i. John was the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, devout persons and of priestly rank. His mother was cousin of Mary, the blessed virgin mother. His birth was six months previous to that of the Messiah. It was pre-announced by the angel Gabriel, was attended by marked miracles, and celebrated by his father in an inspired song. He waxed strong in spirit, and preparatory to his stern mission "he was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel." While our Saviour was maturing to manhood in Galilee, John was growing up to be his forerunner in the hill country of Judea; so totally unacquainted, that when Jesus came into John's presence for baptism, the Baptizer knew him not.

The Baptist—That is, the Baptizer. Many learned men have maintained that the baptism of proselytes existed among the Jews before the coming of John. After a critical review of the question of its existence, (Bib. Rep., April, 1853,) Prof. Stuart decides that "the probability, on the ground of evidence, is strong against it." John then was probably called the *baptist* as being the *first* baptizer. Passages like John i. 25 and Matt. xxi, 24–27 are most naturally explained under the view that John originated baptism proper by divine appointment, but in accordance with a Jewish expectation, that something of the sort would be established, suggested by passages like Isa. lii. 15; Ezek. xxxvi, 25; Zech. xiii, 1.

Preaching—That is, *proclaiming;* or still more literally, *heralding,* or *crying forth as a herald* who goes forth to make proclamation. Heralds were anciently kings' criers, who went forth to proclaim their mandates.

Wilderness of Judea—In the deserts near the Jordan. John appears to have begun his ministry first in the rural districts near Hebron. Afterward he removed nearer to the wild tract between Jerusalem, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea; and finally took his position at Bethabara. This spot he selected from the need of plenty of water. Along the western margin of the Jordan and Dead Sea the country was wild, and covered with but a thin population. Bethabara was traditionally believed to be the place where Joshua and the tribes entered the land of Canaan. Hence its name signifies the ford of the Jordan.

It is proper here to point out some

spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, [d] The voice of one crying in the wilderness, [e] Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

[d] Isa. 40. 3; Mark 1. 3; Luke 3. 4; John 1. 23.

[e] Luke 1. 76.

of the special traits in which Elijah was the *historical* type of John.

Elijah was the founder or introducer of the prophets, as Moses was of the law, and as John was the introducer of the kingdom of Christ. He preceded the coming and indwelling of God with the prophetic order; as John preceded the coming and indwelling of God in Christ. He dwelt apart, as John did, in the desert, as a rebuke of the corruption of the social mass. He had his Ahab and his Jezebel, by whom he was murdered in intention; as John had his Herod and his Herodias, by whom he was murdered in reality.

2. *Repent*—The Jewish nation had in the time of John verged to the extreme point of depravity. Such is the testimony given in the strongest language, and painted in the most vivid colors by their own historian, Josephus. John came therefore to bring about a *reformation*, in order to set them in fitting state to receive the Messiah. That is, it was his mission to bring them to the moral standard of the Mosaic law, in order to fit them for the Gospel. Like his type Elijah, he was but partially successful; and a captivity, worse than punished Israel for rejecting Elijah, has fallen on Israel for rejecting John.

Kingdom of heaven—As Jesus is the Messiah, that is, the Anointed, that is, the King, so his Gospel is a law, and his dispensation is a kingdom. As a false king, namely, Satan, the adversary, has long maintained on earth the unrightful dominion of hell, so it is Messiah's mission to come to the earth and raise the kingdom of heaven. This kingdom on earth is the shadow and lower apartment of the kingdom above. Sometimes both the kingdoms, above and below, are contemplated as one. *Is at hand*—The establishment of this kingdom was predicted by Daniel, chap. ii, 44: "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." The kingdom of heaven, expected by the Jews of John's day, varied according to the views of different individuals and different sects. Generally they expected that the Messiah, a man endowed with attributes more or less divine, would be the founder and monarch of that kingdom. It should be a holy kingdom, rule over all nations, and last for ever. Israel would be, instead of Rome, the ruling nation of the earth. At this particular time the dominion of Rome over Judea was oppressive. Palestine was governed by a Roman procurator, who held his capital at Cesarea, leaving Jerusalem in a secondary rank. The national feeling was embittered, and seditions under rebellious leaders were constantly occurring. Hence it was a favorite thought that the Messiah should break the Roman yoke, and rule supremely at Jerusalem.

3. *This is he that was spoken of by Esaias*—Isa. xl, 3–5. I agree with Mr. Watson, that the passage has no reference to the return from Babylon, (as some commentators imagine,) of which it would be no true description.

The voice of one crying—The passage is more fully given by Luke, chap. iii, 4–6, to which, or to the prophet, the reader should refer. Dr. Thomson says: "When Ibrahim Pasha proposed to visit certain places on Lebanon, the emeers and sheikhs sent forth a general proclamation, somewhat in the style of Isaiah's exhortation, to all the inhabitants, to assemble along the proposed route, and prepare the way before him. The same was done in 1845, on a grand scale, when the present sultan visited Brusa. The stones were gathered out, crooked places straightened, and rough ones made level and smooth. I had the benefit of their labour a few days aft

4 And [f] the same John [g] had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was [h] locusts and [i] wild honey.

[f] Mark 1. 6.—[g] 2 Kings 1. 8; Zech. 13. 4.

[h] Lev. 11. 22.—[i] 1 Sam. 14. 25, 26.

his majesty's visit. From customs like these comes the exhortation of John the Baptist: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight,' etc."

And so King Messiah is coming with all his train to assume his dominion. Before him a herald comes to prepare the way. The herald's voice is heard ringing from the wilderness through which He is to march. As before the chariots of ordinary kings, the road must be graded; the elevations must be lowered and the depressions raised; so before this Divine King the very mountains must sink, and the vales must rise to prepare a level for his wheels.

4. *Raiment of camel's hair*—Of the finer hair of the camel an elegant kind of cloth is manufactured in the East called *camlet*. Of this our European and American camlet is an imitation, made of wool. But John's garment was a coarse stuff, woven of the long and shaggy hair of the camel, such as was anciently worn by monks and anchorites. It was not, therefore, as some imagine, the camel's skin. So his type Elijah *was a hairy man* in his dress. 2 Kings i, 8. So the false prophets imitated him by wearing *a rough garment to deceive*. Zech. xiii, 4. Elijah also was girt with a *leathern girdle about his loins*. 2 Kings i, 8. It was customary to wear a girdle around the waist, in order to confine the loose dress to its place.

Meat—Food. This sense of the word, like most of the peculiarities of phrase in the Scripture, is the old English mode in use when the Bible was translated. *Locusts*—The law of Moses gave permission to eat locusts. "These may ye eat, of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four...the locust after his kind, and the bald locust," etc. Lev. xi, 21. The Eastern locust is a food of a poor kind. On this subject Dr. Thomson says: "Do you suppose that the meat of John the Baptist was literally locusts and wild honey Why not? by the Arabs they are eaten to this day. The perfectly trustworthy Burckhardt thus speaks on this subject: '*All* the Bedouins of Arabia, and the inhabitants of towns in Nejd and Hedjaz are accustomed to eat locusts.' 'I have seen at Medina and Tayf *locust shops* where these animals were sold by *measure*. In Egypt and Nubia they are only eaten by the poorest beggars.' 'The Arabs, in preparing locusts as an article of food, throw them alive into boiling water with which a good deal of salt has been mixed. After a few minutes they are taken out and dried in the sun; the head, feet, and wings are then torn off; the bodies are cleansed from the salt and perfectly dried, after which process whole sacks are filled with them by the Bedouin. They are sometimes eaten boiled in butter, and they often contribute materials for a breakfast when spread over unleavened bread mixed with butter.' Thus far Burckhardt. Locusts are not eaten in Syria by any but the Bedouin on the extreme frontiers, and it is always spoken of as a very inferior article of food, and regarded by most with disgust and loathing—tolerated only by the very poorest people. John the Baptist, however, was of this class, either from necessity or election. He also dwelt in the desert, where such food was and is still used, and therefore the text states the simple truth. His ordinary 'meat' was dried locusts; probably fried in butter and mixed with honey, as is still frequently done. This honey, too, was the article made by *bees*, and not *dibs* from grapes, nor dates from the palm, nor anything else which ingenious commentators have invented. Wild honey is still gathered in large quantities from trees in the wilderness, and from rocks in the wadies, just where the Baptist sojourned, and where he came preaching the baptism of repentance." *Wild*

5 [k]Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

[k] Mark 1. 5; Luke 3. 7.

6 [l]And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

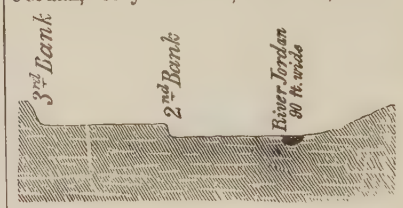
[l] Acts 19. 3, 4, 18.

honey—The chance honey produced by wild bees in hollow trees or clefts of rocks. So 1 Sam. xiv, 25: "All they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground. And when the people came into the wood, behold the honey dropped." This coarse and wild diet was intended by John, as well as by Elijah, to represent a perpetual fast.

John here presents the symbols of the repentance he preaches, according to ancient customs. The hair or sackcloth, the fasting and the solitude, were the ordinary outward signs of deepest humiliation. The whole process was a mode of saying: "We confess ourselves by sin unworthy of every blessing, even of food and raiment, and deserving to be sunk into humiliation and woe." And John did not this for himself, but for the people. He was their representative. He was showing them by sign, as well as by word, what they ought to be and do. At the same time, by retreating from all society, he was protesting against the unutterable apostacy of the whole social system.

5. *Went out*—Left their homes and went to the desert. *Jerusalem, and all Judea*—Never was preacher, for the time, more successful than John. At his voice from the wilderness the heart of the whole nation was stirred. When they beheld his stern form their spirits were awed. When he announced the kingdom of heaven their expectations were roused. At no time perhaps did the preaching of Jesus himself produce so great a movement. Nor did the common people ever lose their reverence for the Baptist; the rulers never dared deny that he was a prophet, lest they should be stoned by the people. So prominent did he become, that Josephus, who, perhaps, never referred to Christ, did, as we shall remark in our notes upon the twelfth chapter, mention John the Baptist. Nor at this day are there wanting skeptics who affirm that John was the superior of Jesus. Yet the excitement of John's preaching was but temporary; but for Jesus his name would be almost unknown; while the seed quietly sowed by Jesus, growing in secret, hath become the great tree which fills, and shall fill the earth. The whole social mass was moved. *All about Jordan*—On both sides. There could have scarce been less than millions. There was once three millions of Jews at one passover. This was a movement of another kind, but no less numerous.

6. *In Jordan*—The Jordan had several banks within banks, so that a person could be in the Jordan on dry ground. "In approaching the river," says Dr. Thomson, "you descend several benches or terraces." This expression, "in the Jordan," only indicates, therefore, where



the rite was performed; it in no way indicates the mode.

The JORDAN is, historically, the most interesting river in the world. It derives its sources from the snows of the Lebanon, whence it flows down to the Lake Gennesaret, through which it passes. Its current through the middle of that lake is distinctly visible Thence it descends, through a distance of about sixty miles, to the Dead Sea. Its channel is very serpentine, but it trends, very directly, toward the south. The narrow plain upon its banks is usually very fertile. It is calculated to be, on the average, about thirty yards wide and nine feet deep, and its current is very rapid.

7 ¶ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, [m]O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from [n]the wrath to come?

m Chap. 12. 34; 23. 33; Luke 3. 7-9.

n Rom. 5. 9; 1 Thess. 1. 10.

Confessing their sins—Thus acknowledging that repentance was the object of their baptism. This act of repentance and baptism, under the administration of John, truly performed, had two effects: 1. It placed the subjects of the baptism in a present state of grace and favour with God. 2. It placed the heart in a right state to receive the coming king—Messiah—even in his mild and spiritual form, and to enter into his coming kingdom. Perseverance in the same temper, and progress in the same direction, would have brought them to the purposed result. It was by apostacy that Israel lost the Saviour.

7. *Many of the Pharisees and Sadducees*—Many, but not all. They were the heads of the Church and State, and it was hard for them to come down into the vale of humiliation.

The PHARISEES derived their name from a Hebrew word signifying to separate. It indicated a profession of standing apart from a wicked world. When they arose is not clearly known. Their number at Herod's death, according to Josephus, was six thousand. They claimed to be the orthodox party, and believed in the strictest letter of the law and all the traditions of the rabbies. They maintained their power by display of external sanctity, and so became hypocritical and ambitious; they exercised great influence over the popular mind; they finally only served to shed an air of sanctity over the wickedness of the day, and thus became the authors of a full security for crime. When John came many of them presented themselves for baptism. A few may have been truly penitent, but the larger number, perhaps expecting that they would be the hierarchy in the new Messianic realm, were insincere. When there came a Saviour from sin instead of a saviour from Rome and a conqueror, their hearts were wholly hostile unto him. They adhered to their sins; they took a stand of opposition to him; they involved themselves in rankling hate, sophistical gainsaying, plots and conspiracies, until they consummated their whole career by false accusation and judicial murder.

The SADDUCEES were worldly unbelievers, who admitted, indeed, the Pentateuch as the temporal though divine constitution of the state, and Moses as a founder; but denied immortality, spirits, angels, or resurrection. Their name is derived by some from their supposed founder, Sadoc, who flourished in the time of Alexander the Great; but others maintain that the word is but a form of the Hebrew word for "the just ones." Their ideal theory of righteousness was very high; for a maxim, derived from Sadoc himself, as is claimed, runs thus: "Be not as those slaves that serve their master on this condition only, namely, that they may receive a reward." But a maxim of such a nature could serve as little else than a moral pretension, which could be repeated with a lofty air of virtue, but would leave the heart and life to practical selfishness and sin. Herein the Sadducees resembled the Grecian Stoics, and the sect derived, no doubt, much of its character from Grecian philosophy. They were generally aristocrats in government, philosophical in profession, and ambitious of rule. Many of the Jewish statesmen were of this sect.

There was a third sect, called ESSENES, who lived in monastic seclusion, (very much like the Shakers of the present day,) renouncing meats, wine, marriage, and all secular life, and giving themselves up to visionary piety, and worshipping angels Many of these, doubtless, became Christians, and brought in those heresies to the Church. Indeed, they were perhaps the original authors of the monkish and conventual system subsequently developed in popery.

Generation of vipers—Not only in the history of the fall, but through the Bi-

8 Bring forth therefore fruits [1] meet for repentance:
9 And think not to say within yourselves, [o] We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.
10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: [p] therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
11 [q] I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not

1 Or, *answerable to amendment of life.*—*o* Jno. 8. 33, 39; Acts 13. 26; Rom. 4. 1, 11, 16.—*p* ch. 7. 19; Luke 13. 7, 9; John 15. 6.—*q* Mark 1. 8; Luke 3. 16; John 1. 15, 26, 27, 30, 33; Acts 1. 5; 11. 16; 19. 4.

ble generally the serpent is the emblem of a wicked race. John really holds these classes of men as the head and front of Jewish wickedness. They were responsible, in a great degree, for the depraved character of the times. John evidently knows their radical insincerity; they are, in spite of their coming for baptism, *serpents*, and of the very essential race of serpents.

8. *Fruits meet*—John evidently sees the want of a proper prospect of reformation in these men correspondent with the external repentance. *Meet*—Suitable.

9. *Abraham to our father*—Abraham is but poorly the father of a brood of serpents. John warns them that bodily descent will not save them; they will be tried under the severe law of an individual responsibility. *Of these stones*—Pointing, perhaps, to the stones of the Jordan. In thus sinking the high claims of Judaism, John, no doubt, indicates the coming rejection of the Jewish race.

10. *Axe is laid unto the root of the trees*—Is about being laid by the axeman's stroke. The verbs of this verse are in the present, to express a closely approaching future. *Root*—To express utter destruction. It was not to be a simply organic destruction, but individual also. Each individual fruitless tree was to be hewn down by a stroke of *death* and *cast into* the subsequent *fire* of *perdition*. No Abrahamic descent could save them.

11. *He that cometh after me is mightier*—This entire speech of John's is mainly founded on the closing two chapters of the Old Testament, to which we have already referred, where is predicted the day of Christ's coming, preceded by his harbinger, and attended by all the terrors of searching scrutiny, divine blessing, and fiery judgment. In this expression John alludes to Mal. iii, 1: *Behold, I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Jehovah whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple.* (We may here remark that LORD, in capitals, in the Old Testament, means Jehovah, the incommunicable name of God.) The one to come after John was, indeed, mightier than he, being no other than Jehovah incarnate. *Shoes*—Whenever a Jew entered a respectable house he left his sandals at the door. Orientals of rank are attended by a servant, who takes them in charge; and this is a very menial duty. But so humble is John the Baptist in comparison with his Lord, that the service which is too disgraceful to be performed for any man by anybody but the lowest servants, is too honorable for him to perform. This menial duty was sometimes performed in reverence by disciples for the rabbi. *Baptize you with the Holy Ghost*—God's holy Spirit had been at various times bestowed in sanctifying, regenerating, and miracle-working power under the old dispensation. Since the close of the Old Testament books, miracles had ceased, but Christ came preceded, attended, and succeeded by a stupendous display of divine powers. *The baptism of the Holy Spirit* in its sanctifying, quickening, and even wonder-working power, was one of these displays. It was even made visible in the memorable season of Pentecost. Acts ii.

worthy to bear: [r]he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

12 [s]Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat

r Isa. 4. 4: 44. 3; Mal. 3. 2; Acts 2. 3, 4; 1 Cor. 12. 13.—*s* Mal. 3. 3.

This text is the *fundamental passage* for showing, from the very nature of the rite, what is the true mode of performing baptism. This I have shown at fuller length than is here possible, in my two sermons on The Double Baptism, in the Methodist Episcopal Pulpit. We may here remark: 1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was not by immersion but affusion. At the Pentecost, where the Spirit baptism was made visible, the tongues of fire descended and *sat upon them.* When our Lord was baptized the Holy Spirit *descended* and *lighted* upon him. On Cornelius and his company it was *poured out.* So Titus iii, 5, 6. The washing of regeneration is *shed* on us. Baptism by the Holy Ghost is always by affusion. 2. If so, then the word *baptizo*, as a religious rite, does not necessarily or properly signify immersion. It is the *descent* of the *element* upon the *person*, not of the person into the element. For if baptism by the element *spirit* is *affusion*, then baptism by the element *water* is *affusion.* The meaning of the *word* is the same whatever be the element.

3. We have here a principle of interpretation. The symbol ought always to conform to and picture its original. Now, spirit baptism is the original of which water baptism is the symbol. If spirit baptism be by *affusion*, certainly water baptism must also be *affusion.* Spiritual *affusion* cannot be symbolized by *immersion* in water. Hence immersion fundamentally fails to be a picture of the original. It is symbol without a reality, a shadow without a substance.

4. The baptism by fire is a case equally clear. Its process was made visible at the Pentecost, when the fiery tongues sat upon the apostles. Immersion in fire suggests, indeed, the image of casting into penal fire. So, verse 10, the fruitless tree is *cast into the fire.* So, Rev. xx, 15, cast into the lake of fire.

And with fire—The baptism of spirit and of fire are no doubt different parts or phases of the same process. To understand the difference between the two phases we must reduce the idea of *spirit* back to its simple idea of a breathing. "He breathed upon them and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John xx, 22 Hereby was effected the gentle impartation of holy tempers, consecrating unction, and comforting grace. The baptism of *fire*, manifested in the fiery tongues at Pentecost, is the severer purgation, burning sin away by sharper agonies, imparting a severer spiritual purity and energy, and qualifying the preacher for the performance of sterner rebuke to ward a wicked world.

12. *Whose fan*—John here proceeds to describe the terribly discriminating and adjudging process which the coming king Messiah was about to perform. Similar images are contained in Malachi iii, 1–6, upon which and upon Malachi iv, we have repeatedly said John's speech was founded as a prediction of his day. *Fan*—Or winnowing shovel. Wheat was winnowed from the chaff by dropping it from an uplifted shovel, so that the chaff might be taken off by the wind. *Purge*—Cleanse from the chaff. *Floor*—The area of flattened and hardened *ground* in the field where the winnowing was done. *Garner*—Granary or grain depository. The garners or granaries of the East are often excavations in the earth in which the grain is buried; frequently for the sake of concealment, either from an enemy or from an oppressive government. Sometimes, the owner being slain or driven away, the subterranean treasure is found accidentally by the plow, or other means. *Unquenchable fire*—A reference is here made to the practice of burning the chaff under process of winnowing. Lest the flying particles of chaff should be driven back into the wheat, a fire is made to burn, in whose blaze the chaff

into the garner; but he will [t] burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

13 ¶ [u] Then cometh Jesus [v] from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But [x] John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil

t Mal. 4. 1; ch. 13. 30.—u Mark 1. 9; Luke 3. 21.—v ch. 2. 22.—x Luke 1. 43; John 13. 6, 8.

is forthwith consumed. The wheat is the righteous, the chaff is the wicked, and Christ is the winnower; the granary is heaven, the *unquenchable fire* is hell.

This epithet *unquenchable* is decisive against Restorationism and against Destructionism.

Restorationism teaches that the wicked will be delivered from hell; but this supposes the word *unquenchable* to be an empty terror devoid of meaning. For to what amounts it that the fire is unquenchable if the sinner may be snatched from it at any moment? what cares he for the phantasm of a hell *forever empty* though forever burning? Moreover, what sense in supposing a hell forever preserved flaming, yet forever void. But, in fact, hell is the penal condition of the condemned sinner, and the fire the penal essence itself; hell has no existence save as a penalty for guilt. Terminate the penalty and the fire has gone out.

Destructionism is the doctrine that the sinner ceases, by the penalty, to exist. So that God still keeps an empty hell eternally burning! In other words, this term *unquenchable* is unmeaning, and so essentially false.

§ 16.—Baptism of Jesus, 13–17.

13. *Then cometh Jesus*—We have already remarked (ver. 1) on the unacquaintance of John with Jesus, according to John i, 31–33.

Though the visible descent of the dove-form Spirit was to be a complete token to John alone, that does not prove that the descent was visible to John alone, or that the scene itself of the baptism was (as some commentators think) secret. A similar testimony to his Divine Sonship (John xii, 28, 29) was certainly not secret.

14. *John forbade him*—This clearly implies that though John was unacquainted with his person, yet the spirit of discerning within recognized the *divine in Christ.* So confident is John of this, that though he knows him not, he addresses Jesus as his own superior. He only needs to behold the sign that God has appointed, and then he will proclaim him to the world openly. Before that token is given John does not dare to preach him to men. In this way it will be seen that there is no contradiction, as some have supposed, with John i, 31.

I have need to be baptized of thee—John has objections. But what objections! They are deep, gentle humility itself. The rough voice of the rebuker melts down to tenderness when he sees the great, gentle One coming. I am a sinner, thou art the sinless One; I am the sent messenger, thou art the coming Jehovah-Messiah. And comest thou to me for baptism? O baptize my body and soul with thy blessed spirit.

15. *Suffer it*—Gently the Baptist declines, gently the Saviour insists. He could command, he only requests. *It becometh*—Such is the divine propriety *Us*—That is, it becometh not one alone, but both of *us.* It is becoming my mission to submit to humilities; it becomes your office to recognize my submission. *To fulfil all righteousness*—To meet every legal and official requirement.

In regard to our Saviour's baptism, there are three difficult questions to be answered: 1. Being sinless, how could he be baptized with the baptism of repentance? 2. Being John's superior, how could he receive baptism from him? 3. Being king, Messiah, how could he be prepared to become a subject of his own kingdom?

1. To the first question it is replied, that Christ's whole life was a b

all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 [y]And Jesus, when he was [b]baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw [z]the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 [a]And lo, a voice from heav-

y Mark 1. 10.—*z* Isa. 11. 2; 42. 1; Luke 3. 22; John 1. 32, 33.—*a* John 12. 28.

the sins of others. He assumed *humanity*, that the penal liabilities of humanity might be imputed to him.

2. To the second question it is replied, that, however superior our Lord was *in nature*, John was at that moment his superior *in office*. So the priest who anoints the king, or the chancellor or judge who administers the oath to the president, is at that moment his *official* superior.

3. To the third question it is replied, that every candidate baptized for fitness for the coming kingdom, is baptized for his own place in that kingdom; the subject for subjection, the king for royalty. John's baptism of Jesus, therefore, was, as it were, an unction for his kingship or priesthood.

16. *Baptized—How* he was baptized is not said. His coming *out of* the water aids us not in guessing how, for the preposition properly signifies *from*. Nor if Jesus waded into and out of the water, would it in the least aid the matter. Thousands in ancient and modern times have been baptized by affusion, as they are represented in ancient pictures, standing or kneeling in the bed of a stream. But at any rate, the mode of his baptism was such as to make it the symbol and picture of the spiritual baptism which forthwith *descended upon him* in dovelike form.

And he saw—That is, Jesus saw the dovelike Spirit. And John says that he saw it. John i, 32. There is no proof for the opinion of some that it was unseen by many others. *Like a dove*—That is, in a dovelike shape, as Luke beyond all equivocation declares—*in a bodily shape like a dove*. That is, the Spirit invested itself with a dove form, in order to make itself visible to their senses. It assumed the form of a dove, as that bird was to the minds of those pectators the emblem of innocence. We cannot understand the purpose of commentators who endeavour to mar the beauty of this gracious manifestation by talking of its not being a dovelike form, but forsooth a quivering motion, (of what?) like a dove!

And here have we not a striking illustration of the Incarnation? As the Holy Spirit, the third hypostasis in the Trinity, assumes the bodily form of a dove by way of self-manifestation to the eyes of men, so what difficulty in supposing that the second person of the Trinity should become God manifest in the flesh in a human form? So, many a time in the Old Testament, the angel of Jehovah, or rather the angel-Jehovah, being no other than Jehovah manifest, is described as appearing to the patriarchs. In Eden Jehovah-God walked in the garden, and pronounced sentence upon Adam. Jacob wrestled with God "face to face" at Peniel. The angel-Jehovah appeared to Moses, and said, "I am the God of thy Father." And revealing his name, to be uttered to Pharaoh, he says: "Thus shalt thou say, I AM hath sent me unto you." The most learned doctors in the Church, in all ages, have agreed, and that on most reliable ground, that this personage so at various times appearing, was no other than the Son of Man, seen at last in vision by Daniel, (chap. vii,) invested with "an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away." Few persons, at any rate, feel any difficulty in supposing, or at least comprehending and conceiving, that these angelic forms were visible embodiments of the person of Jehovah. What greater difficulty is there in conceiving that the person of Jesus should have been as truly the visible representative manifestation, or embodiment, of the same Divine Being?

17. *Voice from heaven*—Proceeding as from the firmament, just as the dove

en, saying, [b]This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

o Psa. 2. 7; Isa. 42. 1; chap. 12. 18; 17. 5; Mark 1. 11; Luke 9. 35; Eph. 1. 6; Col. 1. 13; 2 Pet. 1. 17.

like form came from what, in optical language, all men would call the opening firmament or sky. *My beloved Son*—Here the whole Trinity united at the scene. The Son is consecrated by the Spirit, and proclaimed by the Father. So John passed through the three stages of ignorance, faith, and knowledge: ignorance, when he knew him not; faith, when first he saw him; knowledge, when God the Father acknowledged him from heaven. Now he could safely identify him to the world as Lamb of God.

CHAPTER IV.

§ 17.—Temptation of Jesus, 1–11.

For great missions the preparation is great trials. It was befitting that the newly inaugurated Prince of Light should come into a trial-contest with the prince of darkness. Our views of this transaction we present with sincere diffidence, giving often what appears to us as on the whole the best solutions, rather than dogmatic certainties.

We can view this transaction neither as a mere *train of thought*, as a *vision*, as a *parable*, nor a *myth;* but as a great verity, occupying a most significant place in the system of sacred realities. The first Adam truly was tempted, and fell; the second Adam was as truly tempted, and won the victory. Hence he became the great head of triumphant humanity. Tempted in all points as we, he shows how to overcome. We remark:

1. The history implies in the abstract human nature of Jesus the *power* to sin. This is necessary in order to a responsible, free agency. If he had no power to choose sin, it is difficult to see how he could be tempted to a choice, not only impossible, but consciously impossible. If he could not comply with temptation, there could be no danger, and truly no temptation at all. If he was unable to comply with the temptation, there was no virtue in the non-

CHAPTER IV.

THEN was [a]Jesus led up of [b]the Spirit into the wilder-

a Mark 1. 12, &c.; Luke 4. 1, &c.—*b* 1 Kin. 18. 12; Ezek. 3. 14; 8. 3; 11. 1, 24; 40. 2; 43. 5; Acts 8. 39.

compliance. He was that much no free agent; his non-compliance was necessary and mechanical, and so non-meritorious. The supposition that Christ could not sin raises him above all fitness to be an example for us as one "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Propose such a pattern to a fallible sinner, and he can answer conclusively, "Make it *impossible* for me to sin and I will be as holy as he." None but a free agent can be an example for a free agent. Nor is any but a free agent capable of responsible probation. This free agency implies not, indeed, *a preferential state of soul for evil*, as exists in depraved man, but a susceptibility, as in the perfect first Adam, to impressions which, voluntarily followed out to excess or misdirection, would become sin. This view implies no uncertainty of his accomplishing our redemption. For, in full view of all possibilities, the infinite wisdom and foreknowledge of God had selected, for Messiah, that being, of all others, who, he foresaw, would, with perfect free will, prefer God to Satan, and, in spite of all temptation, prove true to his redemptional office. Hence, while there was an intrinsic *possibility* in the thing, there was a full and perfect *certainty* upon which the divine mind could rest, that that possible catastrophe of his fall *would not* take place.

2. In the whole transaction we are to view the Saviour in pure humanity. As he is led by the Spirit to the scene, so the blessed human one stood sole and singular in the universe—a pure lone man, as the first Adam himself, leaning, indeed, as every Christian may, on the divine arm, yet as truly able to fall by his own will from all union with God, as our first progenitor, and truly able, by freely standing, to maintain an *identification* with God, impossible to the man of Eden.

3. As God said to Satan of Job, so now, we conceive, he said of his Son: "Behold, he is in thine hand, but save his life." Satan had it in his power to tempt him only with apparent *good*. Not now was his hour and power to try him with *untold agonies*. But by withstanding the temptations to the apparently *good*, the man Jesus proved his fitness to stand the terrible ordeal of *ill*.

4. This surrender to Satan was greater, we think, than is ordinarily conceived. So far forth as the necessities of the trial required, yet with no power of violence or contamination, our Lord's person was in his hand. How else did Satan take him to the temple's summit, or to the mountain top? Or how did he make all the kingdoms of the world visible to his eye? The miracles indicated in the first query may be supposed to be performed, 1. By creating the conceptions in the Saviour's mind; or, 2. By snatching his soul from his body; or, 3. By transporting his person so with the quickness of a thought, that he is not to be conceived as on his way at any intermediate point. We adopt the last as being perfectly supposable, and as best meeting the honest demands of the literal history. The miracle suggested in the second question above, of making visible to his eye all the kingdoms of the world, but simply requires that we frame our ideas to the unparallelled statement. It is as conceivable that Satan should endow a human eye with miraculous vision, as that he should fire the human blood of Job with miraculous heat, and compel it to fling out boils upon the skin. That he should do this upon a high mountain, where the natural eye could see as far as possible, accords with the universal rule that the miraculous should never be used where the natural will suffice; or rather that the natural should furnish a *nucleus for the miraculous*, just as our Saviour, touching with his finger, or with a clay and spittle ointment, the eyes of the blind, formed a *nucleus for the miracle of restoration of sight*.

1. *Led up...into the wilderness*—As the preposition *up* indicates that the wilderness was *high ground*, and the circumstances of the temptation suggest the nearness of the temple, we may accept the tradition which assigns the wilderness of Judea and Mount Quarantania as the locality. This is in the mountainous region toward Jericho, within a brief distance of Jerusalem. Dr. Durbin thus describes the scene on his journey from Jerusalem to Jericho:

"After pursuing our way for an hour or two down the rugged ravine which forms the road, we turned to the left, and ascended into the desolate and blackened mountains of the 'Wilderness of Judea,' the scene of John the Baptist's ministration and of our Lord's temptation. Of all places in the world, it is naturally fittest for the centre and kingdom of Satan the destroyer; for, as Maundrell says, 'it is a most miserable, dry, barren place, consisting of high, rocky mountains, so torn and disordered as if the earth had suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward.' This fearful wilderness, not ten miles east of Jerusalem, has always been the abode of violence and misery. The very road on which we passed was the scene of our Lord's parable of the Good Samaritan.

"About half way between Jerusalem and Jericho we passed the crumbling walls of a large khan, with immense cisterns. Following the rugged road, often through avenues cut in the rock, we came, by two o'clock, to the eastern edge of the wilderness which overlooks the plain of Jericho, clad in deep green verdure, caused by the fertilizing streams of the Fountain of Elisha. Beyond it, deep in the valley, and as yet invisible, flowed the Jordan, while the view beyond was closed by the dark masses of the mountains of Moab, inviting the eye of the pilgrim to select *Nebo* and *Pisgah*. I paused on the brow of the mountain, near the well-preserved remains of a Roman aqueduct, which once supplied water to the city of Jericho, and gazed upon this wide and gloomy panorama encircling the rich green plain which lay spread out far away below me. Immediately around was the dreary

ness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward ahungered.

3 And when [c]the tempter

[c] 1 Thess. 3. 5; Rev. 2. 10.

wilderness already described; to the right, in their deep, sunken bed, lay the still waters of the Dead Sea; far to the left, the mountains of the wilderness projected into the Jordan, and closed the plain to the north. In that direction, just above the Fountain of Elisha, rose above the rest the dark, thunder-scathed head of Mount *Quarantania*, which tradition assigns as the 'exceeding high mountain' from which Satan showed our Lord 'all the kingdoms of this world.' Its summit seems inaccessible; yet a little chapel is perched upon it, and its side next the Jordan is cut into caverns and chambers, in which we saw at night the flitting taper of the hermit, or of the pilgrim doing penance during Lent."

Of the Spirit—So Ezekiel iii, 14: "The spirit lifted me and took me." So also Acts viii, 39: "The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip...Philip was found at Azotus."

To be tempted—Put to the test. His virtues were to be tried by a contest with his and our great adversary. The heads of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of hell must meet in contest. How vapid to reduce all this to a vision! *The devil*—The Diabolus or Accuser. The being who accused Job, and who brings ever a charge against God's elect. He is not the "personified principle of evil," but a being deeply animated by the purpose of evil.

1. We have no more right to reduce Satan and hell to figure, than we have Christ, angels, and heaven, nay, God himself. If there are good beings in the body there are also bad. So, also, if there are good bodiless spirits, there may be bad. It is no more contrary to the nature of God's government that there should be a Satan, than that there should be a Nimrod, a Tamerlane, or a Mohammed.

2. Though Satan is not *omnipresent* nor *omnipotent*, he may fill a vast space with his presence. We know not how much of the earth he may overshadow at the same moment. And we know not how numerous the demoniac angels who do his bidding, and through whom he tempts the sons of men.

3. The allusions to *his fall from a state of purity* are too numerous and pointed to leave a doubt as to its being a doctrine of Scripture. Such are John viii, 44; Jude 6; 2 Peter ii, 4.

4. Satan is *crafty* beyond measure, but very little *wise*. There may be depths of cunning and masses of knowledge in him, and yet many of the plainest, simplest things of redemption, Christ, and Scripture, may be utterly unintelligible to his fatuity. The simplest saint, though immeasurably outwitted by him, may be deep, beyond his comprehension, in the things of God. So the bee can build her comb with the science of a profound mathematician without being able to count three.

2. *Had fasted forty days*—Just so Moses fasted forty days at Sinai, (Deut. ix, 9,) and so Elijah fasted forty days. Moses was founder of a dispensation; Elijah was restorer; and Christ was both founder and restorer. And as Christ was led by the Spirit, so it was *the divine will and order* that he should pass this ordeal as an induction to his office. As Adam and Eve in the garden were, *by the divine order*, made to fast from a particular food, so Christ in the wilderness was required, *by the same divine order*, to fast for a particular season. *He was...ahungered*—He hungered.

THE FIRST TEMPTATION, 3–4.

3. *The tempter*—The being who loves to lead man into sin. *Came to him*—In what form Satan came is not said. He tempted Eve as a serpent; perhaps he tempted our Lord as an angel of light or truth. At any rate, he was at first disguised; for our Saviour did not recognize him to be Satan until the deceiver claimed his worship

came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, [d] Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

5 Then the devil taketh him

d Deut. 8. 3.

If thou be the Son of God—The consciousness of his divine union with God, so far forth as he had yet received it, may now, perhaps, be supposed to be in a measure withheld. He is the pure-minded, guileless, guiltless Jewish youth, alone in the wilderness; worn and weak with the fasting and the excitement with which the fast had been sustained. Was it not a rare chance for Satanic counsels? "How know you that you are the Son of God? True, there are some prodigious narratives about your birth, but they may be fables; there were the dove and the voice dropped from the sky at your baptism; but that may have been an ocular illusion. It is a great thing for a quiet young man to imagine himself Messiah and Son of God." *Command*—Nothing like experiment. Try to put forth miraculous power, and that will show whether or not you are divine. *That these stones be made bread*—You are hungry. Here is the material, and you have the power. Use your Messianic power to supply your bodily wants. So you will at once prove your divinity and satisfy your hunger.

In this first temptation Satan tempts our Lord, as he did Eve, by the bodily appetite. He appeals to the animal nature first. By this avenue he approaches and conquers the great majority of mankind. Beneath this temptation of bodily appetites all gluttons, drunkards, and debauchees have fallen and become the devil's prey.

4. *He answered*—Our Lord, like Eve, though with more constancy and better success, quotes *God hath said.* Our Saviour may not have known to whom he quoted Scripture; but as the devil dared not reveal his wicked character, Jesus won the argument. *Man shall not live by bread alone*—Man's whole life and nature are not sustained solely by material food. Bodily food may imperfectly sustain the body. But man has something nobler than stomach. He has a spirit, noble, God-given, immortal. Hence, though feeding my body with bread made from stones may gratify my hunger, it may irreparably ruin my higher nature. *By every word... of God*—As the *bread* feeds the body, so the *word* feeds the soul. The *word* is the manna by which God sustains our spiritual nature. Whether it be his instructive, consoling, or preceptive word, it is by that *every word* proceeding from the mouth of God that man's soul liveth. The soul of the man Jesus, as here intimated, lived by a perfect obedience to every preceptive word proceeding from God, which preceptive word now forbade him to create that bread by which the body might live, but the soul perish. But what wrong would there have been in transforming the stones and eating the bread? We answer, he would have transgressed *the divine order* specified in our comment on verse 2. He was still under the rule of the Spirit; and *the period of his inductive probation was unexpired.* Had he complied with the tempter, he would have fallen by just the same sin as the first Adam. His probation lasted until the moment that *angels came and ministered unto him.* Adam chose to live by the corporeal food; Christ chose to live by the word that *proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

THE SECOND TEMPTATION, 5–7.

5. *Taketh him*—Many commentators interpret this as merely meaning that Satan induced the Saviour to go with him to the temple. But these same commentators do not maintain that in verse 8 our Lord walked up *the exceeding high mountain.* And yet the words implying Satan's control of his person are the stronger in this verse. The devil not only *taketh* him, but *setteth* him on a pinnacle of the temple. To sup-

up [c]into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, [d]He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is

[c] Neh. 11. 1, 18; Isa. 48. 2; 52. 1; chap. 27. 53; Rev. 11. 2.—[d] Psa. 91. 11, 12.

pose that our Lord voluntarily walked from the wilderness, breaks the continuity of the scene, and the unity of place.

Holy city—So called, in spite of many a wickedness, as being the seat of the theocracy. "They call themselves of the holy city, . . but not in truth, nor in righteousness." Isa. xlviii, 1, 2. *Pinnacle*—or little wing, as the word means. It was doubtless the summit of the royal gallery built by Herod over the brink of the valley of Kedron, with a dizzy height from summit to bottom of seven hundred feet, down which as any one looked, according to Josephus, "he would become dizzy, his eyes being unable to reach so vast a depth."

6. *If thou be the Son of God*—By resisting the former temptation, Jesus had maintained himself to be the Son of God, and had sustained his own faith in his own divine mission. Let him now show that faith in his mission on a more heroic scale. A sublime faith is just the temper for a sublime display. Let him leap from the summit of the pinnacle to the depth of the gorge. All the world will wonder at so grand an exploit. *Cast thyself down*—Put God to the test, and astonish the universe. Use thy Father's power, like a wanton son, for freaks and experiments at miracle. *For it is written*—And so the devil can quote Scripture to make out his point. Nothing makes wicked men so self-satisfied as to be able to bless their crime with a holy text. They can ridicule the Bible, and trample upon it at any other time. But they are profoundly biblical, and deep reverers of God's holy and inspired word, if a text can be wrested to their purpose. They, like Satan, only use the Bible for the occasion, as the plaster for sin. They truly insult the word of God, and do truly add blasphemy to the sin which they try to make it cover. *He shall give . . . charge*—Psalm xci, 12. Some have questioned how this text in the Psalms is truly to be applied to Christ. But it is a probable fact that the main body of the book of Psalms has for its subject, a holy one, a perfect and therefore divine man, a Messiah.

Mark that the Bible, like every other good, can be misused and wrested for our own destruction. It is a part of our probation, that God has not given a revelation so unequivocal that perverse minds may not pervert it to the service of error and sin. The honest heart can alone use it with true security. *Charge concerning thee*—As a parent gives the nurse charge concerning the tottering child, so God has given his angels charge concerning thee, his dear son. *Hands shall bear thee up*—Angel nurses shall carry thee in their arms. *Dash thy foot*—Hit thy foot against an obstacle and stumble.

7. *It is written again*—One text should limit, modify, and explain another. Promises are not to be wantonly presumed upon. They are to be interpreted in the spirit of the divine Promiser. The promise of God to keep us presumes that we soberly and truly desire to be kept.

It would be well for those who maintain *the infallible perseverance of all saints* to ponder this point. They quote God's promises to keep and preserve the converted man in every case, omitting to note that *all such promises of God are conditional.* He will keep us, under proviso that we rationally and voluntarily will to be in his holy keeping. *Tempt*—Or put to the test. To assume to draw at will upon the fund of his Father's omnipotence, to perform a capricious ex-

written again, [e]Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the [f]kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

e Deut. 6. 16.——f Rev. 11. 15.

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, [g]Thou shalt worship

g Deut. 6. 13; 10. 20; Josh. 24. 14; 1 Sam. 7. 3.

periment, would be a presumptuous tempting and insulting God.

The first temptation, as we showed, (in verse 3,) appealed to the animal appetites. This second rises to the higher sentiment, *the love of show—the gratification of admiration.* All those who are carried away from God by the love of pomp, the gratification of mental taste, the pleasures of imagination, the gaieties of fashion, the enthusiasm for fame, and are induced to pervert for these objects powers given by God for rightful use, fall by this temptation. They tempt God by expending the powers he has given for ostentatious, wanton, selfish, and destructive purposes. The first temptation was animal, the second æsthetical.

The Third Temptation, 8–11.

8. *Again*—Satan is twice defeated. He could not persuade Jesus to distrust his Sonship, nor presumptuously to assume it. He will make a third effort. He will offer Jesus a Messiahship and a royalty beyond all possibility of doubt, and beyond all limitation. He will first authenticate his power by miracle; he will then show the splendor of the prize; he will then declare on how easy terms, and under what allegiance, Jesus can be a Satan's Messiah, lord of the world under "the god of this world." *An exceeding high mountain*—Arriving like a thought at his destination, Satan lays no hand upon him; all is done, as we may suppose, by the power and with the quickness of a volition. And as the Saviour's bodily eye took in the limits of the prospect, his perceptive faculty, outreaching its material organ, acquiring the sweep of Satan's own vision, beheld all the kingdoms of the earth and around the globe, with the glory thereof, in an instant of time.

Yet, after all, it is not said that our Lord really *beheld* the world's kingdoms. It only says that Satan *showed*, that is, *pointed them out*, for the word asserts nothing more. Yonder, eastward, lies Persia; down southward is old Egypt; and, lo! far to the west, beyond the Mediterranean, is imperial Rome, where Tiberius now rules the world. Thou shalt possess his throne and more. And Satan points with his hand, and paints with his tongue, and offers him a warranty of all that goodly parcel of land. Why should he prefer a doubtful Messiahship to a certain universal monarchy?

10. *Get thee hence, Satan*—For now Satan has, so to speak, showed his cloven foot. This soft-spoken man, this most interesting angel, turns out to be none else than God's foe. He demands to be worshipped! and that ends the matter. The devil is a coward; he only needs resistance, and he runs. James iv, 7. Jesus had but to give him a *Get thee hence* and he is gone, and makes room for the better company of angels, whose benevolence and whose form, perhaps, he had been counterfeiting.

As the *first* temptation appealed to the *animal appetites*, and the *second* to the *mental tastes*, so the *third* appealed to the *ambition.* This is the very triple division referred to by St. John: "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." John ii, 16. It is the very triple temptation by which Eve fell. The fruit was good for food, and so appealed to the appetite; it was pleasant to the eyes, and so pleased the sense of beauty; it would make her as the gods, and so it awakened her ambition.

By this last temptation the great men of this world have fallen in myriads

the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, [h] angels came and ministered unto him.

12 ¶ [1] Now when Jesus had heard that John was [1] cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;

13 And leaving Nazareth, he

h Heb. 1. 14.—*i* Mark 1. 14; Luke 3. 20; 4. 14, 31; John 4. 43.—1 Or, *delivered up.*

Not that true greatness is incompatible with goodness. Many a ruler of the people has been the servant of God; but often their ruin has been this temptation—*serve* the devil and *rule* the world. They have believed the devil to be the true dispenser of this world's endowments, and they have sought his patronage.

11. *Devil leaveth him*—Victory, glorious victory, is now won by the Prince of Light. The prince of hell is defeated and overcome. This defeat is the prelude to the hour when the Messiah will cast him into the lake of fire. The second Adam did not, like the first, fall before the power of the tempter; and the victory which he won was won for us, that he might restore the lost Paradise to our race. *Angels came and ministered unto him*—As soon as the angel of darkness departed the angels of light appeared upon the scene. It is a change from deep night to glorious morning. The Messiah is faint with the terrible combat; and to indicate that he is truly master, angels become the providers of his food and the waiters at his table. And so all his followers, who in his strength win the victory, will find angels to become their ministering servants, and will partake, at the table of their Lord, of the feast of victory.

§ 23.—Departure into Galilee; and § 25.—Residence at Capernaum, 12–17.

12. *Now*—With the temptation at the close of the last verse, the first two Periods of our Lord's history, embracing the Infancy and Qualification, terminate.

Thus far Matthew's narrative has marched forward in regular chronological order. But from this point to the next great crisis, namely, his laying the platform of his dispensation in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew's account (constituting only the remainder of this chapter,) is very brief, and unobservant of chronology.

John was cast into prison—The third period, embracing our Lord's Preparatory Ministry, has now commenced. It begins with (events which Matthew omits) his first miracle at Cana, the casting out the traders at his first passover, his discourse to Nicodemus, his baptizing, and receiving John's final testimony, (§ 19–§ 22;) opens more distinctly as John recedes, but maintains its preparatory character until the inauguration of the apostolic college and the Sermon on the Mount. The imprisonment of the Baptist finds Jesus tarrying and baptizing in Judea. By the divine plan, as predicted by prophecy, his preparatory ministry must take place in Galilee. He retires therefore from Judea, and takes his position at the predicted spot.

Departed into Galilee—Galilee was the most northerly of the three general divisions of Palestine. There was an upper or northern part, and a lower or southern part. The latter, lying between the Mediterranean and Lake Gennesaret, was the principal scene of our Lord's ministry. Its principal towns were Tiberias, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Nazareth, Cana, Capernaum, and Nain. Our Lord's disciples were all from Galilee.

The Galileans were a turbulent and fighting race, whose presence frequently produced great disturbances at Jerusalem during the passover. Their dialect was considered by the people of Jerusalem as rustic and impure. Hence Peter's speech proved his Galilean origin, and confirmed the charge of his being a follower of Christ. The name of Galilee occurs in the Old Testament as early as Josh. xx, 7.

13. *Leaving Nazareth*—After being rejected there the first time. (See Hist. Synop.) As Nazareth was in Galilee

came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zebulun and Nephthalim:

this implies that our Lord's course from Judæa was first to Nazareth. Thence, for reasons we proceed to explain, he went and took his residence at Capernaum. *Came and dwelt at Capernaum*—As Bethlehem was the place of Jesus's birth, and Nazareth of his childhood, so Capernaum was the home of his ministry, and Jerusalem the place of his death.

Capernaum was a town situated upon the western shore of the Lake of Gennesaret. Its name is compounded of the words Kefr, village, and Nahum, refreshment. It was called the place of refreshment, from the springs near which it stood. There is much difference of opinion as to its true position. We adopt, however, the opinion of Dr. Thomson, that it was situated at the point which is now called Tell-Hum. The word Hum is doubtless the closing syllable of the word Capernaum. As the word *Kefr* signifies a *village*, and the word *Tell* signifies a mound, or ancient site, so the ancient Kefr-Nahum would be the modern Tell-Hum. The town of Khorazy, about two miles north of Tell-Hum, seems to represent the ancient Chorazin. This place was eminently suited to be the location of our Lord's ministry. The lake by which it stood, though now deserted and lonely, was then the scene of busy life. "Situated," says Stanley, "in the midst of the Jordan valley, on the great thoroughfare from Babylon and Damascus, in Palestine, its waters seemed to answer a purpose like that served by the Lake of Lucerne, between Italy and Germany. Its fisheries furnished a source of sustenance to the surrounding inhabitants, and an industry for its labourers. Its surface was alive with the ships, or rather lake-boats, of fishermen and navigators. Under the Roman government custom-houses were established, at which tribute was taken by the publicans, of which Matthew was one. The adjoining countries of Naphtali and Zebulun, diversified with mountain and vale, were covered with verdure, and cultivated by a swarming population. Its surface was dotted by countless villages, visited by our Lord at various times, mentioned or unmentioned by the evangelists. Thus the double advantages of intercourse by sea and land were secured by our Lord's position at Capernaum."

Which is upon the sea coast—The coast or shore of the Lake of Gennesaret. This lake and its surrounding localities must ever remain one of the most interesting spots on the map of the globe.

The Lake of Gennesaret is seldom mentioned in the Old Testament, or in secular history. In the dim antiquity of the most ancient records, its name appears to have been Cinneroth, of which Gennesaret is the modernized Greek form, and which appears to have been derived from a town of Cinneroth, on its western shore. It was afterward called the Sea of Galilee, and finally, in honour of the Emperor Tiberius, it was called the Lake of Tiberias, and a town was called Tiberias on its western coast.

The Sea of Tiberias is about thirteen miles in length, and, in its broadest part, six miles in breadth. In the clearness of the eastern atmosphere it looks much smaller than its real size. What gives it a remarkable aspect, is the deep depression of its surface not only far below the lofty summits of its banks, but far below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. As the traveller descends from the rocky walls by which it is encompassed, the temperature of its deep basin grows warm. In the summer or late spring it is filled with an atmosphere of oppressive heat, in great contrast with the bracing breezes of the neighbouring hills of Galilee. "All along the edge of this secluded basin," says Stanley, "runs the whole way round from north to south a level beach, at the southern end roughly strewn with the black and white stones peculiar to this district, and also connected with its volcanic structure; but the central or northern part formed of smooth sand, or of a texture of shells and pebbles so minute as to resemble

Safed
Khorazy
CHORAZIN
BETHSAIDA JULIAS
Sulamy
Tellaweh
Achbara
Tell Hum
R. JORD
BUTAIHA
Mills
Tabiga
Khan Minyeh
CAPERNAUM
W. Jermiah
Fountains
Ain et Tiny
W. Shukany
Wel Leemun
Wer Rubudieh
PLAIN OF GENNESARET
Rubudieh
Kusr
Bardawil
Castle of Baldwin
W. es Semak
GERGESA
Ain el Mudower
W. Hamam
Mejdel-MACDALA
LAKE GENNESARET OR TIBERIAS
Hattin
Kul. Ibn Man
Irbid
ARBELA
Ain el Barideh
Eu'leh
TIBIRIAS
Ruins of Ancient City
Tubaryeh
Hammam Warm Baths
HAMATH
EMMAUS
W. Fik
KAMALA
KUL HUSN
Ain ed Domeh
W. el Fedjas
Ard el Hema
Aqueduct
Kerak
TARICHAEA
Samrah
Samakh
HIPPOS
Bridge
Jisr Um el kunatur
Ancient
JORDAN
Mansurah
LAKE OF TIBERIAS
AND ITS
ENVIRONS.

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15 [k]The land of Zebulun, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond

k Isa. 9. 1, 2.

sand, like the substance of the beach on the Gulf of 'Akabah. Shrubs, too, of the tropical thorn, fringe the greater part of the line of shore, mingled here and there with the bright pink colours of the oleander,

> 'All thro' the summer night
> Those blossoms, red and bright,
> Spread their soft breasts'

long before they are in flower in the valleys of the higher country. On this beach, which can be discerned running like a white line all round the lake, the hills plant their dark base, descending nowhere precipitously, but almost everywhere presenting an alternation of soft grassy slopes and rocky cliffs, occasionally broken away so as to exhibit the red and gray colours so familiar in the limestone of Greece."

Through the centre of this lake, from north to south, runs the rapid current of the River Jordan, which, coming down from its sources in the Lebanon, passes onward to the Dead Sea. On both sides of the inlet of the River Jordan, at the northern extremity of the lake, stood the double town of Bethsaida. Thence on the curve of the northeastern shore was the grassy plain of Butaiha, where the five thousand were miraculously fed. Moving down the eastern shore, we come to Kersa or Gergesa, the place of the two demoniacs and the possessed swine. On the western banks were the towns of Tiberias, of Magdala, (the residence of the Magdalen,) Capernaum, and Chorazin. These localities are unparalleled in interest to the heart of the Christian traveller, and no waters in the world are surveyed with such emotions as the Lake of Gennesaret, and the stream of the Jordan.

Borders of Zebulun and Nephthalim—By the ancient division of the tribes, Zebulun bordered on this Sea of Gennesaret. Long before the settlement of the tribes in the land of Canaan, the dying Jacob prophesied of Zebulun, (Gen. xlix, 13:) "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be an haven of the ships; and his borders shall be unto Zidon."

14. *Which was spoken by Esaias the prophet*—Isaiah ix, 1, 2. The prophecy from which Matthew extracts a brief and abrupt fragment, extends through chap. viii, to ix, 7. This entire passage forms one distinct piece of prophecy. Through the eighth chapter the prophet predicts the overthrow of Syria and the northern tribes of Israel by the mighty power of the king of Assyria. The ninth chapter opens with a beam of hope to succeed this terrible overthrow. Terrible as was this period of vexation, "nevertheless," says the prophet, (ix, 1,) "the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea beyond Jordan in the Galilee of the nations." The reason why the dimness should not be such as under the Assyrian overthrow, the prophet proceeds to tell in the six following verses, (2–7,) namely: A great light should arise upon them, an emancipation like the "joy in harvest;" all the weapons of war should be destroyed by the power of the Prince of Peace; "for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given," etc.

This memorable prophecy, or rather that portion of which Matthew quotes the commencement, we will here give in the translation of Lowth:

> "But there shall not hereafter be darkness in the land which was distressed:
> In the former time he debased
> The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali;
> But in the latter time he made it glorious:
> Even the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles,
> The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light;
> They that dwelled in the land of the shadow of death,
> Unto them hath the light shined.

Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

i Isa. 42. 7;

Thou hast multiplied the nation, thou hast increased their joy:
They rejoice before thee as with the joy of harvest;
As they rejoice who divide the spoil.
For the yoke of his burden, the staff laid on his shoulder,
The rod of his oppressor hast thou broken, as in the day of Midian.
For the greaves of the armed warrior in the conflict,
And the garment rolled in much blood
Shall be for a burning, even fuel for the fire.
For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given,
And the government shall be upon his shoulders,
And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,
The Mighty God, the Father of the Everlasting Age, the Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end;
Upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom,
To fix it, and to establish it
With judgment and with justice, henceforth and forever:
The zeal of JEHOVAH, God of Hosts, will do this."

In this piece of prophetic poetry the development and emancipation from its enemies of the Messianic "nation" or kingdom is compared as far superior to the deliverance from Assyria, though upon the same spot. Upon that same locality the light should rise, the joyous kingdom should increase, the oppressor's "rod" should be broken before it, all armour should "be for a burning," and war should cease, for the "Prince of Peace" is born. He is son of David, seated on his throne and ruling his kingdom; which throne and kingdom under him become eternal, since he is "the Mighty God."

15. *The land of Zebulun and the land of Nephthalim*—The territories of these two tribes were the first to feel the overthrow and captivity of Assyria, at first *lightly*, and then more *grievously*. And according to this prophecy, that ancient dimness and darkness should be reversed by a light that should burst upon the people, produced by the coming of the Prince of Peace. The ancient Jews accordingly expected that the coming of the Messiah would be in

16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and

Luke 2. 32.

these regions. One of their books, called the Sohar, has this declaration: "The Messiah shall be revealed in the land of Galilee." Grammatically, we may remark that the repeated word *land* in this verse is in apposition with *the people* in verse 16. The two *lands* and *the people* it is which *sat in darkness, and saw the great light.*

By the way of the sea—The word *way* here signifies route or tract of country; and the phrase, *by the way of the sea*, signifies on the borders of the sea. It describes the situation of the *land* of these two tribes, as being contiguous to the Sea of Tiberias.

Galilee of the Gentiles—This phrase is commonly understood as a geographical name of a particular part, namely, of northern Galilee. But it is very plain that northern Galilee, which lay far beyond the lake, could not here be meant. Hengstenberg says that it is not a *geographical name* specifying a particular part, but simply a phrase of description. Galilee is called *of the Gentiles* because, from various circumstances, a Gentile population had largely intermingled with the Jewish. This had corrupted their religion, debased their character, and produced much of the darkness which had deepened into *the shadow of death.*

16. *The people*—That is, the people of the land of Zebulun and Naphthali.

Sat in darkness—The prophet says, "*Walked in darkness.*" *Sat in darkness* embraces the same idea, but an intenser meaning. He who *walks* in darkness may be looking for light; but he who *sits* in darkness is settled in his condition. *Saw great light*—The prophet describes the future as past. Before his eye the scene transpires. The people are described as sitting in hopeless midnight, when a sudden noonday breaks upon them. *Shadow of death*—Physically we conceive there to be a darkness of night, and also a deeper darkness of death. Spiritually

to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

17 ¶ [m] From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, [n] Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

m Mark 1. 14.——*n* chap. 3. 2; 10. 7.

too as here, there is to the souls of men a darkness of moral night; and when this becomes hopeless it deepens to the *shades* of spiritual and eternal death. In this condition of hopeless spiritual darkness of death, were these Galileans when the Messianic light, Jesus, the Redeemer, sprung up upon them.

17. *From that time*—From the time of John's imprisonment and the Saviour's settlement in Capernaum.

Began . . to say, Repent—As the preaching of the Baptist had ceased, the Saviour took up the Baptist's theme. That theme was repentance, as preparatory to the founding of Messiah's kingdom. *Repent*—Repentance includes two elements, renunciation of our past sin, and the adoption of a future better course. This renunciation is founded upon a sorrow more or less emotional, and an abhorrence, more or less earnest, of our past misdoing. But the genuineness of our repentance depends less upon the emotional excitement, than upon the strength of the volition by which we have renounced the past, and the reality of the reformation in the future. The repentance that produces no reformation may have some sincerity, but little soundness, and no happy result.

Kingdom of heaven—See note on Matt. iii, 2.

§ 26.—Call of four Disciples, preceded by Miracles, 18–22.

18. *Saw two brethren*—Of this call of Simon and Andrew a fuller account is given in Luke v, 1–11. This was not the first meeting of our Lord with the brothers, for that is narrated in the first chapter of John. Nor is it to be identified with their incorporation into the body of the twelve apostles, which

18 ¶ [o] And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon [p] called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

19 And he saith unto them,

o Mark 1. 16, 17, 18; Luke 5. 2.——*p* John 1. 42.

is narrated in Mark. iii, 14. This call to follow him as a disciple was intermediate between those two events and preparatory to the latter. It may be remarked that in the apostolic college there were two couples of brothers, namely, Simon and Andrew, James and John. All four were from Bethsaida, on the Galilean side of the Jordan.

Simon, called Peter—A Hebrew and a Greek name, according to the custom of that day. The Greek name, *Petros*, was given by our Lord in allusion to the hardy nature of this, the oldest, the most ardent, and, from the boldness of his character, the most conspicuous of the apostles. Hence he was chief of the apostles until surpassed by St. Paul; but not in the Romish sense. He possessed not a *primacy* of office, but a *pre-eminence* of character. On the contrary, Andrew, of the same stock, is tame in character and obscure in history. As apostles, they were officially equal; as men, they possessed by nature a great disparity.

They were fishers—We have already remarked that the waters of the Gennesaret were prolific of fish, the taking of which formed a large share of the occupation of the dwellers upon its shores.

19. *Fishers of men*—The comparison of the preacher to the fisherman, as derived from this passage, was a favourite idea with the early writers of the Christian Church. Fish in the waters are as sinners in the world. It is the preacher's art so to bait the hook of divine truth as that, with ready appetite, the sinner will receive it and be captured for salvation. Hence there was a striking accordance, and perhaps even an intended typeism, between the early

Follow me, and [q]I will make you fishers of men.

20 [r]And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him.

21 [s]And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James, *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, [t]teaching in their synagogues, and preaching [u]the gospel of the kingdom, [x]and

q Luke 5. 10, 11.—*r* Mark 10. 28; Luke 18. 28.
s Mark 1. 19, 20; Luke 5. 10, 11.
t Chap. 9. 35; Mark 1. 21, 39; Luke 4. 15, 44.
u Chap. 24. 14; Mark 1 14.—*x* Mark 1. 34.

engagements of these men and their subsequent profession as apostles.

20. *Straightway left their nets*—They had been previously disciples of John. The preaching of Jesus had divinely impressed their hearts. The miracle performed upon the present occasion, as detailed by Luke, had filled their hearts with awe. Straightway they left their nets, their boats, their father, and their father's house, surrendering all to follow him, with a quickness that renders them the very model of a prompt obedience.

§ 28.—Jesus's Ministry through Galilee, 23–25.

23. *Jesus went about all Galilee*—In regard to Galilee, consult notes on verse 12.

Synagogues—The word synagogue is from the Greek *σύν*, *syn*, together, and *ἀγω*, *ago*, to collect; and its signification is about synonymous with our American word "meeting-house." They were very numerous in Palestine in our Saviour's time, it being allowable to raise a synagogue wherever ten responsible men could be found. Our Saviour and the apostles found the synagogues most eligible places for the first preaching of the Gospel, both in Palestine and in Gentile countries where Jews resided. St. James calls the place of Christian worship *synagogue*. James ii, 2.

The existence of synagogues long before the captivity cannot be proved. The Church of the Patriarchs worshipped in tents, or under the open sky, or wherever their devotion saw reason to raise an altar. The words in Psalm lxxiv, 8: *They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land*, prove the existence of edifices of worship which fire could consume, before the captivity. After the re-establishment of the Jewish Church in Palestine, care seems to have been taken for their general diffusion, in order that worship and instruction might spread and perpetuate doctrine and piety.

The arrangements of a Jewish congregation, as well as the construction of the synagogue, seem to have resembled those of a modern Christian Church. The people in the front part of the building sat facing the pulpit, or desk on a platform, which was occupied by the reader or speaker. Behind the pulpit were ranged high seats of honour, "chief seats," where the Scribes and Pharisees loved to sit facing the people A chest or ark was near the pulpit, in which the Scriptures of the Old Testament were deposited. From the pulpit the Scriptures were read; and the reader or some other person expounded, taught, or preached. Prayers were also offered; and at the close a solemn benediction was pronounced, and the people responded Amen and dispersed. These exercises took place every (Saturday) *Sabbath*.

The synagogue had its regular officers, who may be divided simply into four classes. First, a "ruler of the synagogue," who was not the minister, but a sort of president or executive over its management. Second, a body of elders, nearly corresponding, perhaps, with our modern trustees. Third the *legatus ecclesiæ*; that is, the *delegate* to

healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 [y]And there followed him great multitudes of people from

[y] Mark 3. 7

representative of the Church, appointed to lead the devotional exercises, corresponding somewhat to the modern preacher or reader. Yet he was often nothing more than the man selected, as we would say, to lead the exercises. Fourth, the *minister*, as he is called in Luke iv, 20, or servant; that is, the sexton, who took care of the cleanliness of the building and other conveniences of the congregation and worship. To these may also, perhaps, be added the *deacons;* that is, the almoners or takers of the collections or alms.

24. *All Syria*—The extent of the country of Syria cannot be defined with much exactness. The name was, perhaps, derived from Syr or Tyre, so that Syria is equivalent to Tyria. In its widest limits it seems to have comprehended all the country lying between the Mediterranean and the Euphrates. The rumour of our Lord's miracles was no doubt circulated with more or less clearness over all that land. The territory from which there came followers and bearers of invalids was of a much narrower extent, as defined in the following verse.

Diseases and torments—Diseases are those illnesses by which the body is enfeebled and the life consumed. Torments are those inflictions producing bodily torture and agony. *Possessed with devils*—That evil spirits are permitted, in some ages of gross wickedness, to possess men, has been the doctrine of the Church in all ages, until the cavils of some modern thinkers, more skeptical than wise, brought it in question. The word here rendered *devils* is more properly *demons*. Strictly speaking, there is but one devil, *diabolus*. He is called Satan, and is the prince of evil spirits or demons. *Possession* implies that the demon occupied the body of a man, like a second more powerful soul, controlled his mental faculties, spoke through his organs, and mastered his limbs. These phenomena might be combined with natural disease. A person enfeebled by malady might be the more easily overcome by the demon, and physical or mental derangements might invite his entrance. Especially maladies and corruption produced by vices and depravity might fit a man for demoniac possession; the demon might operate through his diseases, maliciously aggravate their symptoms, and increase their violence. But the possession and the disease were two distinct things. This appears from the words here used. Diseases, torments, lunacy, and palsy are all mentioned as separate afflictions, differing in nature from demoniac possession. *Lunatic*—This word is derived from *luna*, the moon. It signifies *insane persons*, whose case is supposed to be aggravated by the influence of the moon. The *name* remains as a simple term for insane persons after the *belief* in the influence of the moon has ceased. Its use does not imply at the present day, nor any more in the evangelist, any belief that the moon produces insanity. The most skeptical physician of the present day would not hesitate to use the word, apart from all reference to its etymology.

25. *Followed him great multitudes*—How true to the life this picture is, the following passage will show. "The news that a foreign hakeem or doctor was passing through the country," says Mosier, "very soon was spread abroad, and at every halt our camp was thronged with the sick, not only of the village near to which we were encamped, but of all the surrounding villages. Many

Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judea, and *from* beyond Jordan.

a Mark 3. 13.

CHAPTER V.

AND seeing the multitudes, [a] he went up into a mountain:

came several days' journey to consult our doctor, and were brought to him in spite of every difficulty and inconvenience. Some came on asses, bolstered up on cushions, and supported by their relations; others on camels, whose rough pace must have been torture to any one in sickness. It may be conceived what a misfortune sickness must be in a country where there is no medical relief, nor even a wheel conveyance to seek relief when it is at hand." Our Lord, as a miraculous healer, as well as teacher, doubtless attracted, in a similar way, still greater crowds.

From Decapolis—Decapolis signifies the *Ten Cities*. These ten cities, including their rural territories, lay mostly on the east side of the Jordan, near Lake Gennesaret. Their names are differently given, and their numbers really appear to have varied at different times, amounting at one time to fourteen. They are commonly reckoned to be, 1. Damascus, 2. Philadelphia, 3. Raphana, 4. Scythopolis, 5. Gadara, 6. Hippos, 7. Dion, 8. Pella, 9. Galas, 10. Canatha. But one of these, namely, Scythopolis, was situated in Galilee.

From beyond Jordan—From the Greek word πέραν, *peran*, signifying *beyond*, the country beyond Jordan was called Perea. This name in its largest sense was applied to the whole strip of territory lying east of the Jordan, and bounded on the east by mountains, which divided it from Arabia Deserta. In its narrower sense, it designated the territory east of the Jordan, toward the south. According to Josephus, its northern limit was at Pella, its southern at Macheron, its east at Philadelphia, its west the Jordan.

This paragraph of the evangelist, beginning at verse 12, gives a general view of our Lord's ministry during its period in Galilee. It properly succeeds the account of the temptation by which our Lord was proved and perfected for the work It also well prepares the way for the great summary of his moral doctrines contained in the Sermon on the Mount, which he now sets before us.

It is well remarked by Mr. Stanley, that the scene of the main events of the first three Gospels was in Galilee, while that of the fourth was mainly in Jerusalem. These three, then, he calls the Galilean Gospels.

CHAPTER V.

Matthew now proceeds to give a sketch, not complete, yet wisely full, of the PLATFORM of the new dispensation, usually called the SERMON ON THE MOUNT. Upon which observe,

1. That it opens the Fourth Period of our Lord's history. (See Synopsis.) The Qualification is complete with the temptation, iv, 11; the history of the Preparatory preaching of repentance is scantily given by Matthew, iv, 12–25. It includes preaching, miracles, and the completion of the college of the Twelve Apostles. All things were now ready for laying the broad summary of the principles of the Gospel dispensation.

2. The entire sermon was delivered by our Saviour *at one time*. We say this because Olshausen and others have conceded, contrary to Matthew's plain purpose, that he has here *gathered together a summary of the teachings of our Lord given forth at various times*. According to that hypothesis, it is difficult to see how there was any Sermon on the Mount. Our Lord did no doubt, at various times, inculcate the same great truths, even in the same language, upon different audiences. Doubtless he reiterated many a time the same lesson. He was *teacher* as well as *preacher;* and what *teacher* does not repeat to his immature pupils the same principles, even to a weariness? "Why do you repeat that thing twenty times to that child?" was a question put to Mr. Wesley's mother. "Because nineteen times will not do," was the wise answer. Ex-

pressions in this sermon are repeated in Matt. xii, 33; xv, 14; (comp. Luke vi, 39;) xviii, 8, 9; (comp. Mark ix, 43–47.) So the Lord's prayer is again not only uttered, but formally taught to the disciples at their own request. Luke xi, 2–4. Matthew's express words, that *he opened his mouth and taught them saying* these things, as well as his closing remark, that he *ended these sayings*, certainly affirm that this entire sermon was in substance delivered at that time. That the record is not indeed completely full, is apparent from the fact that Luke supplies some things omitted by Matthew, although, in general, Luke's is much the briefest report of the discourse.

3. As this sermon was delivered upon the occasion of inaugurating the twelve apostles, so we may call it his Inauguration Sermon. It was delivered mainly to the inner circle of his apostles; yet, indirectly, for the benefit also of the listening multitudes. He taught his apostles *what they must teach;* and he thereby gave to the multitudes a check by which they could test the genuineness of the apostolic preaching. So the word of God should be in the hands of the people, that they may decide whether the preachers utter its truths.

4. Here remark, that our Lord did not, in direct word, term himself Messiah; but he assumed that position of authority which implied his Messiahship, and prepared the minds of the people to form a true conception of what the Messiah should be. For, first, he takes a position higher than Moses, speaking in his own name as if with an authority to supersede the founder of the first dispensation. And, second, he describes the kingdom of God with such traits as to imply that this new dispensation was to be wholly unlike the worldly and warlike kingdom which popular opinion expected. The multitudes still desired the Messiah which Satan proposed in the temptation, (chap. iv, 9–11.) The world and Satan agreed in their Messiah; but God and Christ agreed in the Messiah of a very different nature. To banish from the popular mind its spurious conception of a Messiah, with his worldly, warlike, diabolical kingdom, is a main purpose of this sermon. Its whole train of blessings, its whole body of doctrines and precepts, are for the true subjects of the divine kingdom. Its woes, its prohibitions, its refutations are against the tempers, practices, and doctrines of the partisans and expectants of the kingdom which Satan suggested to Christ.

5. The *central* IDEA of the discourse is the establishment of the new dispensation as the *kingdom of God on earth*. Of that kingdom God is king, but God as FATHER; so that this dispensation is both kingdom and family; and by coming under its dominion, we become not only subjects, but *children*. Christ, as first-born, is visible king; and all we are, with and under him, brethren, and under God, the Father-king. God, as our sovereign Father, is mentioned expressly some fifteen times, besides other phrases of paternity, and numerous allusions to our childlike relation. See v, 16; vi, 1, 4, 6, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 18, 26, 32; vii, 11, 21.

§ 36.—SERMON ON THE MOUNT

1. *Seeing the multitudes*—Gathered together, doubtless with the understanding that a great discourse was to be uttered. As Luke informs us, he had spent the night previous in the Mount in solitary prayer. In the morning he called and formally chose his twelve apostles. Luke says he then walked down with the twelve to the *level plain*, or "table-land." There it was that the mighty multitudes met him; from Tyre and Sidon north, from Judea and Jerusalem south, they had assembled in vast volume. He had prepared authority for his teachings by countless miracles. The loving multitudes pressed upon him, for power went forth out of him to heal them. At this point Matthew's history commences, beginning with the opening words of this verse: *seeing the* pressing *multitudes he went up into* THE (not A, as in our translation) *mountain*.

What *mountain* this was is not said

and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

by either evangelist. Tradition, however, has selected a mount, which has been called from the event, "The Mount of Beatitudes," which is thus beautifully described by Stanley, a writer not remarkable for ready credulity for tradition:

"The undulating table-land, which skirts the hills of Galilee on the east, is broken by a long low ridge rising at its northern extremity into a square shaped hill with two tops, which give it the modern name of 'the Horns of Hattin,' Hattin being the village on the ridge at its base. This mountain or hill—for it only rises sixty feet above the plain—is that known to pilgrims as the Mount of the Beatitudes, the supposed scene of the 'Sermon on the Mount.' The tradition cannot lay claim to any early date: it was in all probability suggested first to the Crusaders by its remarkable situation. But that situation so strikingly coincides with the intimations of the Gospel narrative, as almost to force the inference that, in this instance, the eye of those who selected the spot was, for once, rightly guided. It is the only height seen in this direction from the shores of the Lake of Gennesaret. The plain on which it stands is easily accessible from the lake, and from that plain to the summit is but a few minutes' walk. The platform at the top is evidently suitable for the collection of a multitude, and corresponds precisely to the 'level place' (*τόπου πεδινοῦ*) to which He would 'come down' as from one of its higher horns to address the people. Its situation is central both to the peasants of the Galilean hills and the fishermen of the Galilean lake, between which it stands, and would therefore be a natural resort both to 'Jesus and his disciples' when they retired for solitude from the shores of the sea, and also to the crowds who assembled 'from Galilee, from Decapolis, from Jerusalem, from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.' None of the other mountains in the neighbourhood could answer equally well to this description, inasmuch as they are merged into the uniform barrier of hills round the lake; whereas this stands separate, 'the mountain,' which alone could lay claim to a distinct name, with the exception of the one height of Tabor, which is too distant to answer the requirements."

From this description we see that there are, in the locality, three grades of elevation above the ordinary level of ground. First, the "*table-land;*" second, the broad area on the hill-top; from which rise, third, the "Horns." We rather suppose that Jesus spent the previous night of devotion in one of the "Horns;" his inauguration of his apostles is upon the level hill-top; whence he descends with the twelve and meets the multitude upon the "table-land," or *level plain* of Luke. Had we Luke's account alone, we should infer that the sermon was delivered upon the "table-land, which is, indeed, a part proper of "the Mount." But from Matthew's words, "seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mount," we learn that Jesus led up the multitudes from the "table-land to the broad level upon the hill." This he doubtless did for the high symbolic reasons that induced the choice of Sinai, Gerizim, Ebal, and Zion for scenes of sublime inaugurations. Herein it will be seen that we differ from Stanley in our identifying the "level plain" (*τόπον πεδίνὸν*) with the "table-land," rather than with the level "hill-top." This view completely conciliates the preparatory statements of the three evangelists.

When he was set—The Jewish רבי *sat* in delivering instruction to his pupils. *Disciples came*—And formed the inmost circle of auditors.

2. *Opened his mouth*—The phrase expresses the importance of the utterance. The Orientals, especially the Hindoos, when narrating the commands or precepts of some god, hero, or teacher, use the phrase, *he opened his mouth*, as a formula of high dignity. They use for the word *opened*, not the ordinary term

3 [b]Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[b] Luke 6. 20; Psa. 51. 17; Prov. 16. 19; 29. 23; Isa. 57. 15; 66. 2.

for *opening a door*, but the term that designates the opening or *expanding* of a flower. *Saying*—This word implies that the following is a substantial summary of his discourse.

The discourse itself has been treated too much by commentators as a mere series of sentiments and maxims, with little plan or symmetry as a whole. If we mistake not, there exists a true order of parts, not formally announced or artificially studied, but naturally arising from the true position of the discourse. Tholuck and Stier have both given plans of the discourse, founded on their own analyses. My own plan differs wholly from either, being, as I conceive, more simple, true, and accordant with the position of the sermon as a platform amid surrounding religious systems.

The discourse, as a programme of the principles of the New Testament dispensation, is clearly distinguishable into three parts, and the following may be given as its outline:

PLAN.

I. CHRISTIAN PIETY, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM IRRELIGION. Chap. v, 3–16.

1. Nine benedictions upon humility, penitence, meekness, aspirations after goodness, mercy, purity, peacemaking, and holy suffering for righteousness' sake. 3–12.

2. Woes pronounced upon contrary traits. Luke vi, 24–26.

3. Active duties enjoined upon the *blessed* ones. 13–16.

II. CHRISTIAN PIETY, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM JUDAISM. Chap. v, 17; vi, 19.

1. Is the completion of *pure* Judaism. 17–20.

2. Distinguished from degenerate Judaism, in regard to (1.) angry passions, (2.) sexual purity, (3.) oaths, (4.) conciliation, (5.) moral love, (6.) sincerity in alms, prayer, and fasting. v. 21–vi, 18.

4 [c]Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

[c] Isa. 61. 2, 3; Luke 6. 21; John 16. 20; 2 Cor. 1. 7; Rev. 21. 4.

III. CHRISTIANITY, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM GENTILISM. Chap. vi, 19–vii, 27.

1. Supreme trust in God our provident Father. vi, 19–34.

(1.) The earth-treasures must not come into competition with the heavenly treasures. 19–23.

(2.) The world-god must not stand in competition with our heavenly Father. 24–34.

2. Supreme reverence for God as our adjudging Father. vii, 1–27.

(1.) Usurp not his place as Judge vii, 1–6.

(2.) Confide in his more than earthly paternity. 7–12.

(3.) Enter the narrow way to him, avoiding all false guides. 13–20.

(4.) Profession no assurance before his judgment-bar. 21–23.

(5.) We stand or fall in judgment only by obedience to Christ's words. 24–27.

I. CHRISTIAN PIETY, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM IRRELIGION.

The Nine Benedictions, 3–12.

3. *Blessed*—The Gospel opens with a blessing, again and again. There are more than the sacred seven. There are the thrice three; the well rounded *nine benedictions*. How many were the *woes* which solemnly echoed to them we know not; for Matthew omits them, and Luke gives them, perhaps, incompletely. This word *blessed* conveys not an opinion or a prayer, as human benedictions do, but a sentence or a decree. Such things are *blessed*, not because he says they are merely, but because he makes and pronounces them so. It is an anticipation of that final, "Come ye blessed," which he will pronounce upon his judgment throne. Our Lord here truly speaks with authority, as the one who will be the final judge of human destiny.

Blessed means not merely *happy*, as even Mr. Wesley renders it. As *hap*

5 [d]Blessed *are* the meek: for [e]they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: [f]for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed *are* the merciful: [g]for they shall obtain mercy.

d Psa. 37. 11.—*e* See Rom. 4. 13.
f Isa. 55. 1; 65. 13.

g Psa. 41. 1; chap. 6. 14; Mark 11. 25; 2 Tim. 1. 16; Heb. 6. 10; James 2. 13.

piness is higher than *pleasure*, so *blessedness* is higher than *happiness*. *Blessedness* is more truly divine. It is the more than happiness produced by God's sunshine in the soul.

Poor in spirit—The *spirit* is the immortal nature in man; and especially the moral part of the human soul wherewith a man is religious and receives and communes with the Divine Spirit. He whose *spirit* the Gospel finds already supplied and falsely rich with something else than the Gospel, cannot receive the Gospel. If the spirit be full and satisfied with some false religion, or pride, or earthly good, or moralism, it has no room or receptivity for the Gospel, and no blessing from Christ. So the outright, self-conscious sinner, morally poor in fact and *poor in spirit*, is often more likely to receive the Gospel than he who has something that is *not religion* in the place of religion. Blessed, then, is he who has a receptive vacancy, a poverty, real and felt, for the Gospel.

Kingdom of heaven—A very bountiful filling up of the vacuity. The pauper shall be a king; his empty box shall be filled with royal treasures.

4. *They that mourn*—Of course all the terms are to be understood as within the sphere of religion. The mourning is not secular, but religious grief—*penitence*. As sin is the only essential evil, so this mourning is *for sin*. And for sin the only *comfort* is forgiveness and divine favour. Penitence is a blessed receptivity of the true blessedness.

5. *The meek*—Who are placidly ready, without pride or captiousness, to receive the good. *They shall inherit the earth*—Rather, *the land*. As Israel were to enjoy the promised land below, so the true Israel shall enjoy that land of which the earthly land was typical.

6. *Hunger and thirst*—Here is something more than mere vacuity, or penitence, or tranquil readiness. It is an ardent longing—a holy appetite for all that is right and good. *Filled*—The Gospel can fill the largest desire for the true good.

Thus far has Jesus, in the act of propounding his Gospel, pronounced preparatory blessings on those who are variously ready to receive it. Four benedictions are thus conferred on a proper receptiveness of heart.

He next pronounces two benedictions on *positive traits* of character; the one being a natural virtue sanctified by grace, the other a gracious state wrought by piety.

7. *Blessed are the merciful*—Mercy is the exercise of benevolence toward the unfortunate or guilty. It may and does exist as a natural quality in the human heart. It is an approvable trait which has survived the fall.

We must here distinguish between a virtue and a piety. A virtue may exist in unregenerate nature. It is an excellence. Nor is it, like some excellences, as beauty of person, elegance of manners, strength of intellect, taste for literature, a mere neutral excellence; for as a *moral* excellence it is in itself superior to any of these. Moral virtues stand as good by themselves, as approved by man, and even, in a sense, approved by God; inasmuch as even to God himself they are better than their absence, or their opposite instead.

But all mere virtue is defective unless the sanctifying grace of God brightens and heightens it to piety. For (1.) it is in itself defective, not being as perfect as it should be. (2.) Being defective, it cannot receive the unqualified favour of God. (3.) Virtues not heightened to piety may be used to wicked ends, as Absalom used his own justice, amiableness, and beauty to win Israel to rebellion. (4.) Mere unregenerate virtues cannot atone for our sins of countless multiplicity. They cannot stand

8 [h] Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for [i] they shall see God.

9 Blessed *are* the peacemak-

[h] Psa. 15. 2; 24. 4; Heb. 12. 14.—[i] 1 Cor. 13. 12; 1 Jno. 3. 2, 3.—[k] 2 Cor. 4. 17; 2 Tim. 2. 12; 1 Pet. 3. 14.

in the place of the Redeemer; nay, they may ruin us by inducing us to make these a substitute for him.

8. *Blessed are the pure in heart*—Here is a trait of character which God's Spirit can alone produce. This is sanctification. It may exist in different degrees. It may be partial; it may be complete. Even when complete, it may, in this world, coexist with many an error of judgment, and many a defect of temperament. Yet it enables us to live without offending God, so as to maintain for us the permanent undiminished fulness of the divine approbation. And when the heart is clean, the eye is clear. When purity makes us like God, then can we realize and see his countenance. The eye of the pure spirit beholds the pure Spirit. Through the beams he shed down upon us, we can look up and see the face that shines. In the light of his smile we behold his smile. So the pure in heart shall see God.

9. *Peacemakers*—A triad of benedictions will now be pronounced on Christian *doings*. Let us be excused for the quaintness of saying, that of these nine benedictions four are pronounced upon Christian *receptivities*; two upon Christian *positivities*, and three upon Christian *activities*. The three *activities* on which he will now pronounce benedictions are *peace-making*, the *endurance of persecution*, the *endurance of false reproach*.

Peacemakers, in the simple and natural sense, are those who seek to remove quarrels and hates, and to produce kindly affections between men. They are good. Though unregenerate men, these men are herein blessed. How much better than mere indifference; how immensely better than the truly devilish opposite. Even if, for other sins and for the defectiveness of this virtue, the peacemaker be not saved from hell, from what *depths* of hell may he not be saved!

But the true peacemaker is Christ himself, who first reconciles God and man. And then, by shedding the Spirit of the God of peace into men's hearts, he brings them to peace. And this is the real basis of all true peace. And he is the true peacemaker who endeavours to lay this basis. He is the true Christian peacemaker who endeavours, like Christ, to plant the divine spirit of peace in men's hearts. And the promise here accordingly is, that as they are herein like Christ the *Son* of God, so *they shall be called the children of God.* So we have a family consisting of the God of Peace, the Prince of Peace, and the sons of peace.

All who truly seek to spread the Gospel, who endeavour to establish the reign of right and truth, who seek to reduce the contentiousness of even the Church, and to bring the imperfect Christianity of the age to a more loving tone, are *peacemakers*. On the other hand, the mere zealots for party and sect, the partisan politician, the warlike statesman, the glory-loving hero, the duellist, the oppressor, are reverse characters, for whom a counter *woe* is implied.

Yet the true *peacemaker* does not seek *peace* by a compromise with sin. That is a false peace which is made with the devil and sin, and is a true discord and war against good and God. Christ, the true peacemaker, was a terrible denouncer of iniquity.

10. *Persecuted for righteousness*—Let us not suppose, however, that peacemakers in this world will always enjoy peace from men. In maintaining truth and right, and all those principles which truly make for the peace and blessing of the world, they will find room for the most heroic firmness, and for the bravest activity. They will find they have blows to take, and sufferings to endure. The scourge, the prison, and the stake have been their fate. But here is a benediction that can pay them for all. And doubtless these simple words have, in all ages, consoled the sufferers for

are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 [l] Blessed are ye when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of [m] evil against you [1] falsely, for my sake.

12 [n] Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for [o] so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: [p] but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be

l Luke 6. 22.——*m* 1 Pet. 4. 14.——1 Gr. *lying.*
n Luke 6. 23; Acts 5. 41; Rom. 5. 3; James 1. 2; 1 Pet. 4. 13.

o 2 Chron. 36. 16; Neh. 9. 26; chap. 23. 34, 37; Acts 7. 52; 1 Thess. 2. 15.——*p* Mark 9. 50; Luke 14. 34, 35.

Christ in dungeons, under the rack, and amid the flame. *Theirs is the kingdom of heaven*—To the persecutor belongs the kingdom of hell, but to the true sufferers for Christ belongs the kingdom of heaven. The *persecution* named in this eighth benediction seems to consist rather of bodily tortures and martyrdoms. Hence the reward is the glorified *kingdom of God.* In benediction first, the kingdom of God below—a present reward for a present want—is promised; but in benediction eighth, the kingdom of glory is the martyr's reward.

11. *Revile...persecute...say all manner of evil against you falsely*—In this benediction it is the endurance of persecution of character, the martyrdom of reputation, by revilings and calumny, which is *blessed.* Opposed to this is the *woe* pronounced upon "you when all men shall speak well of you." The reward is promised in the following verse.

12. *Rejoice and be exceeding glad*—This verse may be most easily explained by reversing the order of its clauses. As your sufferings associate you with *the prophets which were before you,* so like their's *your reward in heaven is great;* therefore *Rejoice,* etc.

2. *Woes pronounced upon the opposite characters.*

To three of these benedictions, St. Luke's report of the discourse contains three counter *woes.* They are so presented as to suggest that Luke reports but a part, and that our Lord uttered an antithetic *woe* for each benediction.

Luke (vi, 24, 25) pronounces a woe upon the *rich* and the *full;* that is, upon those who have made this world's goods, or some other satisfaction, a substitute for the Gospel grace and blessedness. Their case we have sufficiently explained in our comment on verse 3.

Luke vi, 25: *Woe unto you that laugh*—in opposition to the penitents of verse 4. The evil of sin makes no impression upon their revelling merriment; or instead of mourning for sin, they drown the commencing grief with laughter, and perhaps riot. Christ pronounces upon them WOE; a word in which grief and authority in him are combined, and in which future sorrow and vain weeping are predicted for them.

Luke vi, 26: *Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you*—This woe stands opposed to the *blessed,* spoken of those who are reviled for righteousness' sake in verse 11. The phrase *all men* (like the term *the world*) is used to distinguish the great ungodly mass as opposed to the righteous few. The phrase alludes to the fact that, in Jewish history, the mass of the nation—the *all men*—reviled the prophets, and persecuted the righteous few. Woe to that preacher who wins applause by whitewashing sin.

3. *Duties enjoined upon the blessed ones,* 13–16.

Thus far we have in Matthew benedictions. We have now commands or injunctions. The blessed ones are compared to *salt,* and to *light;* as the former, they must *purify* and *preserve;* as the latter, they must *illuminate.*

13. *Ye*—This must have been addressed especially to the apostles, who doubtless formed the front circle immediately around our Lord. Indeed, verse 12 seems to show that the benedictions

salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

q Prov. 4. 18.

were addressed to them. Yet the multitudes, as listeners, were entitled to appropriate their share.

Salt of the earth—The earth, the living world of men, is like a piece of meat, which would putrify, but that the grace and Gospel of God, like salt, arrests the decay, and purifies and preserves it. The apostles, and in their degree all Christians, are the substance and body of that salt. They are the substance to which the saltness inheres. *Salt have lost its savour*—If the living body to which this gracious *saltness* inheres doth lose that quality, whereby shall the quality be restored? *Wherewith shall it*—shall what?—*be salted?*—The *it* refers to the solid *salt* which has lost its saltness or savour. What, alas! shall ever *resalt* that savourless *salt?* The Christian is the solid salt, and the grace of God is his *saltness;* that grace is the very *salt* of the *salt.* Now this solid salt is intended to salt the world with; but, alas! who shall salt the salt? This question the Saviour answers by pronouncing it unanswerable. *It is thenceforth good for nothing*—This shows that it is the savourless salt which needs the salting. And this strong answer shows, too, that in the case supposed, the saltness is not *almost,* but *completely* gone. Not a particle of the grace of God remains, or the loser would not be quite good for nothing. Nor is it to be rightly viewed as a mere abstract possibility, which God secures shall never happen, but a practical matter, which may be believed to happen often and ordinarily. Surely the Antinomian dogma that assures the Christian that God secures him from losing divine grace, cannot stand before this warning passage. *Trodden under foot of men*—The symbol of utter perdition.

Our Lord's allusion to salt that has lost its savour is not without a foundation in natural fact. Salt does lose its saltness by chemical decomposition. But we are inclined to think (with Schoettgen) that the allusion is to the bituminous salt from Lake Asphaltites, which was strewn over the sacrifices at the temple in order, by its fragrant odour, to neutralize the smell of the burning flesh, and which, when spoiled by exposure to sun and atmosphere, was cast out upon the walks to prevent the feet from slipping. Dr. Thomson (vol. ii. p. 44) says: "Indeed, it is a well-known fact that the salt of *this country*, when in contact with the ground, or exposed to rain and sun, does become insipid and useless. From the manner in which it is gathered, much earth and other impurities are necessarily collected with it. Not a little of it is so impure that it cannot be used at all, and such salt soon effloresces and turns to dust, not to fruitful soil, however. It is not only good for nothing itself, but it actually destroys all fertility wherever it is thrown; and this is the reason why it is cast into the street. There is a sort of verbal verisimilitude in the manner in which our Lord alludes to the act: 'it is...cast out' and 'trodden under foot;' so troublesome is this corrupted salt, that it is carefully swept up, carried forth, and thrown into the street. There is no place about the house, yard, or garden, where it can be tolerated. No man will allow it to be thrown on to his field, and the only place for it is in the street, and there it is cast, to be trodden under foot of men."

14 q Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

Phil. 2. 15.

14. *Ye*—Apostles, and indeed all Christians—*are the light of the world*—For how dark the world would be without a Christ, a Gospel, a Holy Spirit, and a Church! Yet the Christian is not like the sun, self-luminous, but borrows his rays, like the moon, from a primal source. Or rather he is like the *candle*, mentioned below, deriving light, yet putting forth vigour to produce light. *A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid*—So the Church of God should be as a central

15 Neither do men [r]light a candle, and put it under [2]a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, [s]that they may see your good works, and [t]glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 ¶ [u]Think not that I am

r Mark 4. 21; Luke 8. 16; 11. 33.——2 Gr. *modius*, a measure containing nearly a peck.

s 1 Pet. 2. 12.——t John 15. 8; 1 Cor. 14. 25.
u Rom. 3. 31; 10. 4; Gal. 3. 24.

and elevated city, visible to all the world. Some think the allusion is to the small city of Safed, which stood on a hill, so visible at the mount of Beatitudes that the Saviour might have pointed to it. The allusion may have been to Jerusalem, which stands upon heights, and is the emblem of the Church.

Of Safed Dr. Thomson (vol. i, p. 420) says: Maundrell, Jowett, and others, throw out the hint that this was the city set on a hill, which could not be hid; and if that greatest of sermons was preached on the horns of Huttin, or near them, as tradition affirms, and if any *particular* city was referred to, there would be plausibility enough in the suggestion. These ancient parts of the castle render it all but certain that there was then a city or citadel on this most conspicuous "hill" top, and our Lord might well point to it to illustrate and confirm his precept. The present Hebrew name is Zephath, and may either refer to its elevation like a watch-tower, or to the beauty and grandeur of the surrounding prospects. Certainly they are quite sufficient to suggest the name. There lies Gennesaret, like a mirror set in framework of dark mountains and many-faced hills. Beyond is the vast plateau of the Hauron, faintly shading with its rocky ranges the utmost horizon eastward. Thence the eye sweeps over Gilead and Bashan, Samaria and Carmel, the plains of Galilee, the coasts of Phœnicia, the hills of Naphtali, the long line of Lebanon, and the lofty head of Hermon, a vast panorama, embracing a thousand points of historic and sacred interest. Safed is truly a high tower, on which to set the watchmen of Zion. My aneroid makes it 2650 feet above the Mediterranean. Tabor looks low, and Huttin seems to be in a valley.

15. *Light a candle*—Or lamp. *Candlestick*—Or lampstand. *House*—The world, or circle of your acquaintance The Christian should, like a lamp, shed divine light upon all in reach.

Neither do men light a candle—Men light candles; God has lighted you for his candles to the world. Men are not so foolish as to light a candle to be covered up, so God is not so unwise as to light you for concealment. You are lighted that you may illuminate. *A bushel*—In Greek *the bushel*, with the definite article, to indicate that he refers to a measure ordinarily in use. It was the *modius*, a measure really containing about a peck.

16. *Let your light shine*—While you indulge no ostentation to win applause for yourself, it is your duty so to manifest the clearness of your *good works* as that *men* may honour the Gospel. *And glorify your Father*—Do nothing to glorify yourself, but everything to get glory to God by honouring the Gospel. The illumination of the candle is not for itself, but for the master whose house it illumines

Men should not wish their donations to a Church or to a charity to be published, for the reputation of it, but in order that the Gospel should have the credit of it, and that others may be influenced to like liberality by the example.

II. CHRISTIAN PIETY DISTINGUISHED FROM JUDAISM, chap. v, 17–vi, 19.

The Saviour next proceeds to show the relations in which his GOSPEL stands to the *previous dispensation*, as being the *fulfilment* and *confirmation* of true Judaism, and the reformation of degenerate Judaism.

1. *Christianity the completion of pure Judaism*, 17–20.

17. *Think not*—The crowds who came to the great gathering at the Mount had

come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, [w]Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise

[w] Luke 16. 17.

their *thoughts*. What will this great Jesus do? Will he destroy the law by letting all commandment go, and fulfil the prophets by a great and glorious kingdom? Or will he wholly destroy Moses, and set the Old Testament at naught? Our Lord gives them a powerful *think not*. Believe not, O ye people, whatever I may say of your elders as false interpreters, that I for a moment disparage Moses. Think it not, whatever your false shepherds may hereafter charge against me. Nor think ye, my disciples, who are to preach my doctrines, that while ye must rend away the false interpretations of the doctors, ye must overthrow the foundations laid by God's ancient word.

It is remarked by Alford that rationalism generally commences by doubting the Old Testament. Paley had said before him, that infidels generally endeavour to wound the New Testament through the Old. Indeed, in the second century a half Christian, Marcion, endeavoured wholly to abandon the Old Testament, and retain Christianity wholly separate. And as these words of Christ were in his way, he altered the text and made it read, "What think ye? That I have come to fulfil the law or the prophets? I have come to destroy, but not to fulfil."

I am come—Not *I am born*. He is the great Comer. He has come for a work, and what that work is he will now pronounce. By so doing he answers the question, *Art thou He that should come?*

The law, or the prophets—The Law and the Prophets was a customary phrase for the whole Old Testament. See chap. vii, 12; xi, 13; xxii, 40. But the Law and the Prophets are here viewed not as merely separate books of the Old Testament. Law, as God's commandment, and prophecy, as God's promises or threatenings for the future, are blended in the whole Old Testament. The law Christ fulfils not only by his own obedience and atonement, but by perfecting its obedience in his saints, and executing its penalty upon the impenitent. The prophecies he fulfils not only in his own life and sufferings, but in the establishment, glory, and perpetuity of his kingdom.

The law, as requiring the Mosaic ritual and the Jewish state, was fully accomplished, and both ceased at the required time. So that Christ does not require any obedience to the peculiarities of the Old Testament in the New. On the other hand, the Old Testament remains divinely sanctioned by Christ as the first volume to the New. Its law was God's law; its prophets were God's prophets. So that no one can strike at one Testament without striking at the other.

Destroy the law...but to fulfil—The *ceremonial* law, consisting of types and shadows, would be fulfilled in the Anti-type, Christ. The *moral law*, which requires man to do right, and only right, and which is mainly embodied in the Decalogue, is perpetual. *Prophets*—They are not destroyed, but their authority is forever established by the fulfilment of all their predictions Christianity, therefore, is not the destruction, but the completion of Mosaic ism. A greater than Moses carries the work of Moses to an honourable consummation.

18. *For verily*—Very emphatic is our Lord in removing all thought that he annuls, instead of fulfilling, the law. He repeats his *I am come;* he adds *a verily I say unto you*, and asserts the infinite value of every point of the law *Verily* is the same in the original as our word Amen, and it was a solemn *so let it be*. As the Hebrews used it for a solemn confirmatory close, the Christian Church has retained it for the same purpose.

Heaven and earth—As Stier remarks

pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 [x] Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach

x James 2. 10.

the *heaven* here is not the *heavens* of verse 12; as the earth here is not the earth promised in verse 5. Heaven and earth as they now are, are transitory. They shall *pass away*.

One jot or one tittle—Our Lord proceeds to show that, so far from destroying or dishonouring the law, he would magnify it even beyond their Pharisaic teachers, who divided its precepts into the weightier and lighter classes, the former of which must be kept, while the latter might be slighted. He taught, on the contrary, that the slightest point of God's law is of limitless obligation and imperishable completion. The *jot* was the yod, (י,) the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. The *tittle* was the term for the point by which very similar Hebrew letters (as for instance, Resh ר and Daleth ד) were distinguished from each other. As many Hebrew words and letters were very similar, a slight change would often very greatly vary the sense. So the Jewish writers had many curious remarks; such as the following, which we quote from Clarke on the passage:

"In *Vayikra Rabba*, s. 19, it is said: 'Should any person, in the words of Deut. vi, 4, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is* אחד *achad*, ONE *Lord*, change the ד *daleth* into a ר *resh*, he would ruin the world." [Because, in that case, the word אחר *achar*, would signify a *strange* or *false* God.]

"'Should any one, in the words of Exod. xxxiv, 14, *Thou shalt worship no* OTHER, אחר *achar*, *God*, change ר *resh* into ד *daleth*, he would ruin the world.' [Because the command would then run, *Thou shalt not worship the* ONLY or *true God*.]

"'Should any one, in the words of Levit. xxii, 32, *Neither shall ye* PROFANE, תחללו *techalelu*, *my holy name*, change ח *cheth* into ה *he*, he would ruin the world.' [Because the sense of the commandment would then be, *Neither shall ye* PRAISE *my holy name*.]"

Our Lord here, of course, uses the names of the Jewish characters figuratively, to indicate the smallest point in the moral force of the law. *Till all be fulfilled*—There is twice a *till* in this verse, rendering the meaning slightly obscure. The sense briefly is, Not the slightest principle of the law shall fail of accomplishment while the world stands.

19. *Whosoever*—Our Lord farther shows his reverence for the law by guarding its least requirement with highest penalties. *These least commandments*—Contained in the Old Testament. *Teach men so*—As many of you may have feared that I or my disciples were about to do, in the new kingdom. Our Lord therefore is here laying down principles affecting the teachers whom he is to send forth. *Shall teach men so*—If to violate, with purpose, a known law of God is a dangerous sin, how much deeper the danger of teaching others to sin! *Least*—Many of the best commentators understand this as signifying that he shall be excluded. Yet such, surely, is not its exact meaning. Clearly to *be least* IN *the kingdom of heaven* is far less than *shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Our Lord's phrase here is adopted by him for the purpose of the antithesis—the violator of the *least* shall himself be *least*. Such mercy is shown to the case of erring man, in whom mistake may mingle in the interpretation of God's laws, even when he would be a wise teacher, that our Lord uses a sentence which may imply, and yet does not absolutely express, exclusion. Such a man's reward is terribly cut down he is scarce if at all saved. Nothing but a state of repentance for all sin, known or unknown, can avail him. *Great*—The true observer and teacher of the law in its completeness shall be

them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed [y] *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said [3] by them of old time, [z] Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That [a] whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:

y Rom. 9. 31. 10. 3.——3 Or, *to them.*

z Exod. 20. 13; Deut. 5. 17.——*a* 1 John 3. 15.

a star of brightest lustre in the firmament of heaven. Our Lord here clearly illustrates the truth of different degrees of future reward.

20. *For I say unto*—By way of illustration of the terrible danger of making void God's law. *Exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees*—These not only violated the spirit of the law, but often both letter and spirit, and systematically taught men so. They could not be even the least within the kingdom; they were excluded from it. They, with all the ancient fathers of their tradition, had lowered the power of God's law, as Jesus proceeds to show in the following verses.

2. *Christianity distinguished from degenerate Judaism*, v, 20–vi, 18.

(1.) In regard to angry passions:

In interpreting much that follows, it is important to understand that corporeal and earthly objects are often made to stand as symbols for spiritual ideas. Sometimes the entire sentence is constructed with a series of such symbols; as, for instance, verse 25. A true interpretation will reduce the figurative to the literal, by substituting the idea symbolized for the symbol. Having prepared his way by showing that he does not oppose but fulfil the pure Judaism, the Teacher now proceeds to reject and condemn the false glosses and traditions heaped upon Moses, which the people had heard from the Jewish doctors.

21. *Ye*—The apostles primarily, the people inferentially. *Have heard*—Not *ye have read* in the law, but *ye have heard* from the elders. Our Saviour is not setting himself up as an opponent, though a superior, of Moses. He is only disburdening Moses of the load of long-standing misinterpretations, and bringing out the law in its own purity. *By them of old time*—By the founders of Rabbinical traditions, which the scribes and Pharisees are now inculcating, and by which they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. *Thou shalt not kill*—The words Thou shalt not kill, are the words of Moses; and at first sight it might appear that our Lord was reproving Moses as being too lax. But this is a very mistaken view. Our Lord does not here so much quote the commandment in the decalogue, as the bald and verbal repetition of it by the rabbies of old, who recited its letter devoid of the spirit. (See note on verses 31, 32.) They confined the criminality to the external act, without tracing the act to the temper in the heart, and so condemning the evil in its root. *Shall be in danger of the judgment*—To the proper legal verdict and sentence in the case.

22. *But I say unto you*—Our Lord here uses the *Ego*, I, with great emphasis. All the traditions of the whole generation of rabbies are to be as nothing before the declarations of this majestic I. *Angry with*—Since all murder is rooted in the angry passion, all unholy anger is incipient murder. *His brother*—That is, *any one.* The term does not signify a blood relative, but is used in conformity with the custom of calling all Israelites brethren. *Without a cause*—Rashly or vainly. It implies all feeling inconsistent with love, or a desire to bring about mild justice and reformation. Some have indeed supposed, without good grounds, that the words *without a cause* are spurious.

and whosoever shall say to his brother, [4b] Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

23 Therefore [c] if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

4 That is, *Vain fellow*, 2 Sam. 6. 20.

b James 2. 20.—*c* Chap. 8. 4; 23. 19.

But, first, there is such a thing as a righteous anger, (Mark iii, 5; Eph. iv, 26; James i, 19,) which is not only not forbidden, but commanded. 1 Sam. iii, 13. And, second, there is the anger for just cause, which in its due measure is just. It is the feeling implanted in our nature which requires our right when wronged; which seeks the reformation of our injurer, and the reparation of our wrong. In default of these it justly demands the infliction of penalty. *Raca*—A Syriac word signifying *blockhead*. Our Lord here does not refer to the mere pronunciation of the word; but to its utterance as the outward *symbol* of an inner malignant purpose to destroy a man's just *reputation for intellect*. *Fool*—In Scripture the fool is an impious fellow, a stupid atheist, a man defective intellectually, because depraved morally. It stands here as the *symbol* for a malignant purpose in the heart to destroy the just moral reputation of a man. Here, then, are three *sins of the heart:* 1. Wrath; 2. A hostility to one's intellectual rights; and 3. A destructiveness toward one's moral character, (the two last indicated by symbols,) rising in grades above each other. For these *three grades of sin* our Lord pronounces *three grades of punishment*. He indicates the grades *symbolically;* and, as before remarked, the meaning is obtained by translating the symbol into its literal. The judicature of the earth stands as an emblem of the judicature of heaven. And the adjustment of the degree of penalty by man to the degree of crime, is paralleled by the adjustment by God to the degree of wickedness, of the penalties of a future world. The symbolical terms here used are, 1. *Judgment;* 2. *Council;* and 3. *Gehenna of fire;* that is, death, 1. by *sword;* 2. by *stoning;* and 3. by *burning*. This will appear by the following explanation: 1. The *judgment* was the penalty of civil crimes, passed by the lower courts, liable to appeal, and it could amount in capital cases to execution *by sword*. 2. The *council* was the Sanhedrim, or court, or senate of seventy-two, (established under the Maccabees,) which decided questions of war and peace, as well as the higher crimes of false prophets, etc These were cases of spiritual treason, and the severer capital penalty of stoning to death was inflicted. 3. Last was the giving over the dead body to the horrible valley of Hinnom. Upon this see note on Matt. x, 28.

The amount of the entire verse, then, is this: Not merely bodily killing, but the mental impulse and purpose, which are the root of all murder—whether it be mental murder of the body, of the intellectual reputation, or of the moral honour—are to be punished according to their aggravations in the high Court of Heaven. Our Lord here conceptually frames a code of divine retribution above, as parallel to the codes of earthly criminal law.

That our Lord did not here lay down rules for human courts is plain. For, first, he was no legislator for human jurisprudence; second, anger cannot be proved or tried by human law; and third, no human court ever hurt a person for saying *Thou fool*.

It follows, therefore, here, 1. Our Lord here does, in opposition to Universalism, threaten a penalty for sin in a future world. 2. That penalty is strictly judicial, and not a mere natural consequence of sin. It is a positive infliction by the hand of divine justice. 3. The degree of intensity (not the duration) of that punishment is adjusted to the grade of the sin.

23. *Therefore*—As an inference drawn from the severe penalties affixed in the last verse to all injuries, even in pur-

24 [d] Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25 [e] Agree with thine adversary quickly, [f] while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

[d] See Job 42. 8; chap. 18. 19; 1 Tim. 2. 8; 1 Peter 3. 7.

[e] Prov. 25. 8; Luke 12. 58, 59.—[f] See Psa. 32. 6; Isa. 55. 6.

pose, committed by us against another. *If thou bring thy gift to the altar*—The image is taken from the sacrifices of the Old Testament. It stands as a symbol for all drawing nigh to God under the new dispensation. Our bringing our gift is the presentation of any worship or service to God. *Rememberest*—In that state of recollectedness and self-examination which true worship implies. *Hath aught against thee—Aught*, or anything, that is, of any of the injuries specified in the last verse. Observe, our Lord is not referring to the case where we are angry, because some one hath injured us. It is the case in which *we have injured another*, and have made no proper reparation.

24. *Before the altar*—Not *upon* the altar. Proceed not so far as to lay thy sacrifice before God. Interrupt the service and *go thy way*. *First be reconciled*—By making the proper reparation. *Then come and offer thy gift*—For not till then will thy sacrifice be holy, or thy prayer accepted.

Our Lord here implies, first, that the *aught against thee* is a just complaint for a real wrong. No one can be supposed unacceptable to God because a captious and slanderous man assails him with charges. And, second, the reconcilement required is not to be measured by the overbearing demands of an unreasonable person; but what we, in an exchange of cases, would justly think our rightful due.

We may here remark, 1. That the enclosure within the railing around the pulpit is properly called *the chancel*. But as the place where our sacred service and self-consecration are performed, it is not without Scripture reason sometimes styled *the altar*. 2. The advice of our Lord to clear our minds of every unholy feeling is all important. Spiritual blessings, outpourings of divine influence, revivals that do not melt away our feuds and quarrels, are of very doubtful character. 3. Yet we would caution any person from giving up the habit or form of prayer because he is conscious of not living consistently with his prayer. Let our prayers continue until they make our sins cease, and do not continue sin and let it make prayer cease.

25. *Adversary*—A plaintiff at law, to whom a debt or payment of penalty is due. *While thou art in the way with him*—An allusion to the Roman law, by which the plaintiff himself seized the defendant, and drew him before the court for trial. So in Luke xii, 58, it is, "When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way." Our Lord here counsels a compromise on the way. *Officer*—Who executes the penalty.

The whole is a symbolical representation of divine judgment, as is shown by the next verse, in which justice without mercy is inflexibly declared. The *Adversary* stands for our offended God. *Quickly* and *the way* stand for the brief period of our probation. The *Judge* is the Son of man at his coming. The *officer* is the judicial angel. Matt. xxv, 31. The *prison* is *hell*. Sentiment, repair every wrong before divine justice inflict punishment to the utmost.

26. *Paid the uttermost*—See on chap. xviii, 30. *Farthing*—About two fifths of a cent.

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, [g]Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever [h]looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 [i]And if thy right eye [5]offend thee, [k]pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, [l]Whosoever shall put away his wife,

g Exod. 20. 14; Deut. 5. 18.——*h* Job 31. 1; Prov. 6. 25; See Gen. 34. 2; 2 Sam. 11. 2.——*i* Chap. 18. 8, 9; Mark 9. 43-47.——5 Or, *do cause thee to offend.*——*k* Romans 8. 13; 1 Cor. 9. 27; Col. 3. 5 *l* Deut. 24. 1; Jeremiah 3. 1; chap. 19. 3, &c; Mark 10. 2, &c.

(2.) Christian law of sexual purity.

27. *Not commit adultery*—The same principles are applied to the seventh commandment as are used in the preceding paragraph to elucidate and disencumber the sixth. Actual adultery is traced to the lust in the heart. The hidden crime is viewed as the essential crime of which the external act is the manifestation.

28. *Looketh...to lust*—Where the will consents, and the volition permits the sensual feeling. Yet not every glance of admiration or desire, cast upon the beauty of one of the opposite sex, is here condemned. Such affections are planted in our nature for pure and beneficial purposes. Not even the recognition of the superior attractions of another man's wife, or another woman's husband, is transgression. Indeed, the sentiment of pleasure arising from beauty of persons around us, may be as pure as the pleasure of surveying pictures. A sweet voice is justly pleasant to the ear a graceful manner to the taste, a fair form or face to the eye. But when from a sentiment it becomes a sensation, the danger commences. If the sensation be volitionally permitted, there is guilt. If nothing but opportunity were wanting to the guilty act, the adultery of the heart is fully committed. God, who sees the heart, holds the hidden man guilty.

29. *Offend thee—Seduce* thee, *entrap* thee to sin; for such is the meaning of the word *offend* in the Greek. *Eye...members...body*—Symbolical terms again We have a corrupt inner system; a depraved hidden man, within the outer man, with all its members, eye, hand, and foot, in which resides our appetency for sin. And yet it is ourself, and cannot be cast into perdition without taking the whole being. Now if this corrupt eye seduce us to adultery, if the itching palm contract theft, if the foot tend to blood, let spiritual amputation be performed. This may bring the whole corrupt man to health. *One of thy members perish*—The adventurous figure is boldly carried out. It is as if some bystander had endeavoured to push our Lord's simile into absurdity by saying, If we amputate as you advise, we should go to heaven maimed. Our Lord virtually replies, Very well; better go to heaven maimed, than to hell whole.

The sentiment, therefore, is—affections and lusts for forbidden objects must be sacrificed at whatever expense of feeling

Upon this passage Roberts remarks "This metaphor is in common use to this day; hence people say of anything which is valuable, 'It is like my right eye!' 'Yes, yes, that child is the right eye of his father.' 'That fellow forsake his sins! never; they are his right eye.'"

31. *A writing of divorcement*—The Mosaic law (Deut. xxiv, 1) was, that if "*uncleanness*" were found in a wife, the husband might "write a bill of divorcement, and put it into her hand, and send

let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32 But I say unto you, That [m] whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that [n] it hath been said by them of old time, [o] Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but [p] shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 But I say unto you, [q] Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is [r] God's throne:

m Chap. 19 9; Luke 16. 18; Rom. 7. 3; 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11.—*n* Ch. 23. 16.—*o* Exod. 20 7; Lev. 19.12; Numbers 30. 2; Deut. 5. 11.—*p* Deut. 23. 23. *q* Chap. 23. 16-22; James 5. 12.—*r* Isa. 66. 1.

her out of his house." On the meaning of the word "uncleanness," the schools of the two Rabbies Shammai and Hillel differed. The former taught that the law allowed divorce for adultery alone; the latter interpreted it to mean any defect of person or character. Divorces thereby had become shamefully common, and the marriage tie of little force. As a consequence, all the laws of morality were loose, and all the best affections of our nature but slightly existed. The family is the true school of the purer virtues and noblest feelings. Where it exists in its full excellence, and its well managed government, the young character is rightly shaped, and men go forth into the world trained to maintain a well ordered society. Where this institution is in ruins, or but loosely maintained, childhood and youth are but poorly formed, and maturer years are lawless and unprincipled. Family disorganization is the forerunner of social disorganization, anarchy, and final despotism.

32. *But I say unto you*—Our Lord has quoted the words of Moses, and seems to oppose them with this *but*. Yet it is not the law in its purity which he quotes and corrects. He does not oppose Moses. But what he does oppose and correct is that law as it is uttered by the mouth of those who quote it for licentious purposes, making it the means of all that dissoluteness described in our note on verse 31. That licentiousness he corrects by limiting divorce to cases of adultery; or rather he restores this provision as the true intent of the law of Moses. *Causeth her to commit adultery*—The dismissing a wife for other cause than unfaithfulness, did not dissolve the marriage. Yet, as by unlawful custom she could marry again, in such cases the husband dismissing her occasioned the adultery. *Whosoever shall marry her that is divorced*—That is, thus unlawfully divorced, and so not divorced at all. *Committeth adultery*—By marrying her who is still bound by an unbroken marriage tie to her former husband, who has unlawfully dismissed her.

(3.) Christian law of oaths.

33. *Forswear*—Perjure. *Shalt perform*—Shalt not commit perjury by breaking thy vows and solemn affirmations.

34. *Swear not at all*—Neither in his prohibition of swearing nor of violence (38–42) is our Lord giving any law for the magistrate or the governmental regulations, but for private conduct. The officer of government has still a right to use force, and the magistrate to administer an oath. In fact, to forbid these things in private life secures that they may be done magistratively with better effect.

None of the oaths which our Lord adduces as specimens are judicial oaths. The Orientalists are great profane swearers, and the secondary oaths here forbidden by our Lord are just the ordinary profanities of their conversation. Dr. Thomson (vol. i, p. 284) says: "This people are fearfully profane. Everybody curses and swears when in a passion. No people that I have ever known can compare with these Orientals for profaneness in the use of the names and attributes of God.... They swear by the head

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is [s]the city of the great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 [t]But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

[s] Psa. 48. 2; 87. 3.

[t] Col. 4. 6; James 5. 12.

by their life, by heaven, and by the temple, or, what is in its place, the church. The forms of cursing and swearing, however, are almost infinite, and fall on the pained ear all day long." Our Lord's caution not to forswear is given because the people held that to violate these minor oaths of conversation was no perjury. Our Lord not only pronounces it to be *forswearing*, but forbids the swearing at all.

35. *Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool*—The Lord here exposes the fallacy of those who avoided using the name of God, and swore by some object created by God. Our Lord declares that to swear by anything of God's is to swear by him; since it is God who gives it all the worth by which it becomes the object of an oath. An oath by God, invokes the attributes of God—his power, justice, and unchangeableness, to sustain our credibility. If, therefore, we swear by anything he has created, we swear secondarily by him; for those same attributes of his give to those things the qualities that render them the basis of an oath.

36. *Swear by thy head*—"It is very common among the Orientals," says Mr. Paxton in his Illustrations, "to swear by the life or head of the king." Joseph, improperly yielding to the fashion of the country, swore by the life of Pharaoh; and this oath is still used in various parts of the East. According to Mr. Hanway, the most sacred oath among the Persians is by the head of the king; and Thevenot asserts that to swear by the head of the king is, in Persia, more authentic and of greater credit than if they swore by all that is most sacred in heaven and upon the earth. The ordinary phrase, "I will give you my head if it is not so," is a colloquial form of swearing of the same kind; it pledges the head or the life upon the certainty of the affirmation.

Thou canst not make one hair white or black—Thy life, thy head, thy every hair are all God's workmanship, and their preservation is his act. To swear, therefore, by life or head, is to swear by the act, power, and person of God. The presumption of the oath reaches the Divine Being.

37. *Yea, yea; Nay, nay*—That is, use in conversation only these simple *affirmatives and negatives*, enforced by no violent adjurations.

Cometh of evil—The oath arises from men's want of conversational veracity, or from an undue excitement of feeling. If men were not false in their simple affirmations no oath would be needed. Hence it is well said *the man is the surety of the oath, not the oath of the man.* Hence it is only where there is much *falsehood* that the *oaths* are needed; so that *lying* and *swearing* are twin vices. The habit of oaths also cherishes excited and violent feeling. It is averse to that calm, self-reliant firmness which both Christianity and dignified character require, and which can depend on its own simple affirmation for all the demands of life.

Men are often excited to more violent passion by the very profanity which is produced by passion. Our own violent expression increases our own violent feeling and character. And thus, lying, swearing, and violence are associate vices.

That the oath before the magistrate is not prohibited is plain, for our Lord himself answered under the oath imposed upon him by Caiaphas. (Chap. xxvi, 63, 64.) As magistracy is instituted by God, so the invocation of his presence has the solemnity of worship.

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, [u]An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

39 But I say unto you, [x]That ye resist not evil: [y]but whosoever shall smite thee on thy

[u] Exodus 21. 24; Leviticus 24. 20; Deuteronomy 19. 21.—[x] Proverbs 20. 22; 24. 29; Luke 6. 29; Romans 12. 17, 19; 1 Cor. 6. 7; 1 Thess. 5. 15; 1 Pet. 3. 9.—[y] Isa. 50. 6; Lam. 3. 30.

not the irreverence of profanity. The oath, then, is the tie of society and not its dissolution. And it is to preserve the purity of the authoritative oath that the licentious oath is forbidden.

So also the solemn appeal to God made by the pious man has none of the irreverence of profanity, but, again, a prayer-like solemnity. So St. Paul, (Gal. i, 20:) "Behold, before God, I lie not;" and, (2 Cor. i, 23:) "I call God for a record upon my soul."

(4.) Christian law of conciliation.

The Mosaic law laid down the rule of punishment by the magistrate, to inflict the evil upon the wrong doer, which the wrong doer had committed against a complainant. Exod. xxi, 22. It was life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. This is, no doubt, for the magistrate, the abstract principle of retribution, which must ever be retained in criminal law. But the Jews introduced this principle of retaliation into private life. Each man became judge for himself when and how far it should be inflicted. Thereby the principle of revenge was cultivated, and all conciliation became dishonourable.

Christ enjoins here a different method of dealing with an assailant. Instead of resenting every affront, and retorting every blow aimed, to disarm him by skilful generosity. Our Saviour expresses the principle by symbolic specimens; that is, by strong external instances. But these outward acts are to be understood as mere symbols to express the internal disposition, and mere examples to illustrate the general rule.

Judgment must always be exercised as to when and in what individual cases these laws of conciliation will apply. Certainly they will not apply where it is clear that no conciliation will follow. Our Lord here prescribes a method for an end, which cannot be used where the end could not be attained, and where the method would only produce useless submission to increasing aggression. The law of self-defence then comes in, to be exercised either under the magistrate, or, if necessary, in our own persons.

38. *An eye for an eye*—This is the old law of retaliation, to which reference has just been made.

39. *Resist not evil*—The word here, *resist*, may also signify *retaliate*. As it is the maxim of individual retaliation that our Lord is here annulling, this would seem to be the natural meaning of the word. It is also the law of retaliation, an eye for an eye, that he is now expounding. The instinct of self-preservation seems to be given us divinely, for the very purpose of instantaneous resistance of violence; and the religion of Jesus does never condemn the healthful action of any one of our primary instincts. Yet the feeling of *revenge* proper, the appetite to inflict a pain upon him who has given us pain, our Lord does condemn. In the place of this he substitutes: 1. The aim to bring the injurer to repentance and reformation. 2. The effort to disarm him by unexpected concession and graceful conciliation. This is the true Christian mode of overcoming a foe.

Still it must be acknowledged that the Greek verb here used signifies to *resist* rather than to *retaliate*. It is a compound word, literally signifying to *stand against*. The command, therefore, is, not *to take our stand in opposition to*, or to *take issue with the evil*. The word in the text rendered *evil* may signify either evil or *the evil person*. The latter is perhaps the preferable meaning. The import, therefore, of the command, with these definitions of the words, may be best completely understood when we have explained the latter half of the verse.

Cheek, turn him the other also—Our Lord gives a supposable instance. The

right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also.

turning the other cheek is a symbol by specimen or sample of the thing. To do this in a bare literal way would probably expose a man to ridicule, especially if known to be a mechanical compliance with the letter of the command. But follow that course skilfully of which this instance is an index. By some method subdue your enemy with an unexpected stroke of generosity, of candour, of concession, of confidence, of appeal to the magnanimous part of his nature. Thus you will make him your friend, develop the good in him, and illustrate the true generosity of the Gospel.

Both members, therefore, of the verse taken together will amount to this: The Christian way of dealing with the bad assailant is not to take issue with him, or to overcome him by hostile force; but to disarm him by generous concessions and benefactions. The sentiment is therefore identical with the precept of the wise man in the Old Testament, (Prov. xxv, 21, 22:) "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee." Yet it would be doing great violence both to the words of Solomon in the Old Testament and of the greater than Solomon in the New, to understand them as commanding us to extinguish the instinct and to disobey the law of self-preservation, when assaulted by some violent and unappeasable foe.

And here we must repudiate the interpretation of our Lord's commands in regard to oaths and to non-resistance of an enemy, adopted by Stier and other German critics, and also by Alford, which represent those commands as not intended for the real, but imperfect Church hitherto existing on earth, but for an ideal Church hereafter to exist. Whatever our Lord's commands were, they are binding in their full meaning now. The fact that the low state of Christian morality renders the declining of oaths and the practice of non-resistance inconvenient at the present time, does not abrogate the law. If the Quaker interpretation be true, the Quaker doctrine is true, and the Quaker practice right, and all Christendom is bound to be Quaker. There can be no sliding scale in Christian morality. Nor is obedience to the commands of Christ to be postponed to some distant age in the unknown future.

40. *Coat...cloak*—How much may a man not gain by a timely and magnanimous surrender! How much does he not gain by the disposition to be above a sensitive irritability and anxiety to maintain his rights and battle for every inch! How many a most contemptible misery can be avoided by the high spirit that can say without ostentation, "You have got that, and I will fling this into the bargain rather than have a quarrel with my neighbour." Even if there be a temporary loss, there is, in the long run, a stupendous gain.

Yet this does not command or advise us to allow a man persistently to assail our wellbeing without prevention or reparation. It does not apply to cases where a ruffian would seize our valuable property, violate chastity, endanger or take life. If possible, reform and benefit an assailant; if that cannot be, then, for the good of society, bring him to legal justice; if his assault be too sudden, defend yourself with the least harm possible to him; if instantly necessary, it is your right, inasmuch as he is a criminal, to save yourself by damage to him. All this is consistent with the law of love.

The *coat* here mentioned was a tunic, worn next to the skin, with armholes or sleeves, and reaching down, like a shirt, to the knees. Its material was commonly linen. It was bound round the waste by a girdle. A person wearing this only is called in Scripture *naked*, that is, undressed. Isa. xx, 2–4; 1 Sam

41 And whosoever [z] shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and [a] from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it

z chap. 27. 32; Mark 15. 21.

a Deut. 15. 8, 10; Luke 6. 30, 35.

xix, 24; John xxi, 7. In later times; this *coat* or tunic was made larger, and a shirt worn under it. The coat of our Saviour, "without seam, woven from the top throughout," (John xix, 23,) was the garment here described.

The *cloak*, called in modern times the "aba," was a large square piece, several feet in length and breadth, and worn very much as an American Indian wears his blanket. It was put on by flinging one corner of it over the left shoulder, and bringing the cloth around the back, then around the right side under the right arm, crossing the breast and reaching again over the left shoulder. Thus, while the left arm took care of it, the right arm was free.

This "aba" or cloak was used by the poor, by night, as a bed. Such were the *garments* spread before the Saviour as he entered Jerusalem. Matt. xxi, 8. See also John xiii, 4; xxi, 7; Matt. xxiv, 18.

41. *Compel thee to go a mile*—The phrase was borrowed from the practice of the oppressive Eastern despotisms. The custom was introduced from the Persian into the Roman government. The royal officers in transmitting government dispatches, were empowered to impress any man into service, and compel him or his beast to perform a stage or two of the message. So Simon, the Cyrenian, was compelled to bear the cross. Now, says our Lord, if any one obliges you to perform some task for him like this, make him magnanimously ashamed, if possible, by doubling the favour.

42. *Give...turn not away*—This forbids a churlish, unsympathizing closeness. It rebukes the maxim, "I neither ask nor grant favours." It commands generosity: yet it is a suggestive, not a universal command. It does not mean that an industrious man's purse must open at the call of every idle vagabond. There are occasions to which it is applicable, and others to which it is not; or rather, it presents specimens of the actions that come under the head of winning men by generous habits.

(5.) Christian law of love.

43. *Love...neighbour...hate...enemy*—The command, Love thy neighbour, (Lev. xix, 18,) was interpreted by the rabbies to include Israelites only. To hate the rest of mankind was, therefore, they held, religiously right. Our Lord, however, extends our neighbourhood over all mankind. As immortal beings, all are entitled to a solemn respect; as children of the same Father, they are the proper objects of our wishes for their wellbeing. That they are our enemies is a good reason why we should ward off their attacks; but it is no reason why we should not wish their happiness. One of the best ways of showing our benevolence is to invent some method of removing their bad disposition and disarming their enmity.

Love your friends and hate your enemies is the law written by selfishness on the human heart. Its necessary effect is to divide mankind into clans

hath been said, [b]Thou shalt love thy neighbour, [c]and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, [d]Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray [e]for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for [f]he maketh his sun

b Lev. 19. 18.—*c* Deut. 23. 6; Psa. 41. 10.
d Luke 6. 27, 35; Rom. 12. 14, 20.

e Luke 23. 34; Acts 7. 60; 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13; 1 Pet. 2. 23; 3. 9.—*f* Job 25. 3.

maintaining perpetual feuds. The action and reaction of revenge, sustained by the *point of honour*, render the feud permanent and cruel. Such was eminently the state of society when our Lord was engaged in dispensing these truths to his Church. To end these feuds, the commencement must be made by the good man's making the advances of patience, of adventurous suffering, of disarming enmity by magnanimous disregard of the standing feud, of the point of honour, and even, sometimes, of the possible law of self-preservation. Here is the finest field for the purest heroism and the noblest generosity. And, at the same time, there is the fullest room for all our tact and fertility of invention to make our generosity truly tell. By blunder, by misapplication, by ill-timed introduction, our magnanimity may wear the look of cowardice; and the enemy, instead of being conciliated, will think himself called upon to trample upon our meanness. Thereby we shall not heap coals of fire upon his head, but apply a coal of fire to inflame his heart.

And what a beautiful and masterly calmness does our Lord here prescribe to the Christian heart. He is to keep his own temper undisturbed, and while his enemy is raging with insane fury he is calmly to study by what skilful application of touching kindness he can transform the lion to a lamb. By so doing he attains a victory; but that is the smallest part of the matter. He has transformed an enemy to a friend; and what is better than either, he has, perhaps, converted a sinner from his error, and saved a soul from death.

44. *Love...bless...do good...pray*—These are the Christian modes of feeling toward enemies. The external act of conciliation is good, and may perhaps prevail. It may immensely benefit our enemy, and yet it may fail of good to ourselves. It may proceed from mere policy. There may be a Pharisaic pride in so managing an impetuous man. Then, alas! though our act was right, yet our heart was not right in the act. We may save our enemy, and lose ourselves. It should be the case that the action springs from *love*. Then the same love that saves one will save both. For our own sake, our heart must be converted from hate. That same indwelling love by which we love God with all our heart, must love our neighbour, including our enemy, even as ourself.

And even if our act of conciliation fails, if our enemy remain enemy, our *feelings* must still be love. The same tranquil, masterly desire to do him good, and to watch the vulnerable point by which he can be approached, and his enmity slain, must be preserved. How happy is such a heart in its own great calmness, even though in the midst of foes, and girt with enmities. Yet nothing but the grace of God, co-operated with by our own determinations, guided by the precepts of Jesus, is ever likely to produce such a state in the heart. When every Christian attains this state, and every man becomes Christian, then complete will be the reign of the Prince of Peace.

45. *Children of your Father*—Images and likenesses of the Father of us all, who in patient calmness disregards the insults of men, and still pours upon them his sunlight and his showers. God, as a Father, we may well imitate, but not God as a judge. To him, indeed, vengeance belongeth, and, at the due time, by him it will be rendered. But it is

to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 [g] For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, [h] what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so?

48 [i] Be ye therefore perfect, even [k] as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

g Luke 6. 32.—*h* 1 Pet. 2. 20.—*i* Gen. 17. 1; Leviticus 11. 44; 19. 2; Luke 6. 36; Colossians 1. 28; James 1. 4; 1 Peter 1. 15. *k* Ephesians 5. 1.

rulers alone that are God's representatives in this respect.

To become the children of God implies *regeneration*, or *being born again*. When a man is bidden to love God, and to love his enemy, he may truly reply, "I cannot love at my will—I cannot love to order—I cannot command a feeling to exist in my heart." His excuse is true, and it proves the very doctrine of human helplessness which he is perhaps inclined to condemn. He cannot create a holy love, nor infuse a single holy emotion into his own heart. But he can *see*, if he will *look* at the *truth written on his own conscience*, that he *ought* to love God and man; and so *seeing* he may look to God the author of his being to renew him in righteousness, and to implant that affection in his heart which by nature he cannot have. That prayer, truly, and sincerely, and perseveringly offered, will be granted. So that while no man can regenerate himself, every man may, at proper will, attain regeneration from God.

46. *What reward have ye*—How have you manifested at all the power of the Gospel? Ye have only done what the most depraved characters on earth are ready to do. How can you expect the Christian's reward for a mere heathen's virtue? *Publicans*—The Roman government had conquered Judea, and obliged the Jews to pay taxes and tribute to support its tyranny. The *publicans* were the officers who collected the Roman taxes, and though they might be otherwise respectable men, they were hated by the Jews as tools of a foreign despotism.

47. *Do ye more than others*—How much soever civilization and the general influences of religion have improved society, the Christian ought to let his light shine by some way showing a superior excellence. He ought ever to be above the average standard of virtue around him. This should not be shown by an extra severity and moroseness, but by an extra serenity, sweetness, generosity, love, and devotion.

48. *Perfect...as your Father*—Be not at the low standard of publicans and other ordinary men; but make God your model; as was commanded in verse 45. Be not low and imperfect, like unregenerate man, but rise to an imitation of our Father. Be perfect, by having a heart purified from all hate, and filled with all love. If thy vessel be filled with love, God can be no more than full. He is the perfect infinite, thou art the perfect finite. The shrine of a temple was the perfect image of the temple. The temple was a perfect temple, the shrine was a perfect shrine. They were different in magnitude, but they were alike perfect.

It is to be remarked that the Greek verb here rendered *be ye*, is truly to be rendered *ye shall be*. It is therefore a promise that if we disregard the low average of customary morality around us, and fully obey the law and enjoy the power of love in our hearts, we shall be perfect even as our heavenly Father is perfect. Alford here remarks: "No countenance is given by this verse to.. perfectibility in this life." Taking the word perfectibility in its evangelical sense, we should like to know why? Our Saviour here distinctly affirms that it depends upon, or rather consists in the indwelling reign of love in our hearts. Nor must any man lower down to his own moral level the high promises of God's word in this behalf. It is a

CHAPTER VI.

TAKE heed that ye do not your [1]alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward [2]of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Therefore [a] when thou doest *thine* alms, [3]do not sound a

1 Or, *righteousness*, Dan. 4. 27; Deut. 24. 13; Psa. 112. 9; 2 Cor. 9. 9, 10.

2 Or, *with*.—a Rom. 12. 8.—3 Or, *cause not a trumpet to be sounded*.

practical promise, which is implied in the prayer of the apostle, and is expressly limited to this life, when he prays: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. v, 23. And it is a practical precept which St. James gives: "That ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." James i, 4. Against these promises of the complete reign of love in the heart, completing our Christian life, it is useless to quote those imperfections and failings which belong to men as men, arising from the limitations of the human mind. Neither St. Paul nor St. James expected that the Christians they addressed would be perfect like angels, or even ideally perfect men, nor perfect performers of God's absolute law. But they did expect that the law of love might possess a perfect power in their hearts, and in that would consist the perfected character of their piety.

CHAPTER VI.

(6.) Sincerity in alms, prayer, and fasting.

Thus far our Lord has distinguished Christianity from the glosses upon the law, of the old doctors, handed down to the rabbies of the day. Passing from doctrines to practices, he now proceeds to condemn the hollow-hearted religious formalism of the degenerate Judaism of the day, maintained for the eye of men rather than of God. Fallen Judaism gave alms, said prayers, and observed fasts, all for human eyes and ears.

a. Sincerity in alms.

1. *Take heed*—Mark well this point of danger. *Do alms*—The Greek word for alms, according to the best manuscripts, is a different word from alms in verse 2. The word literally signifies *righteousness*. According to the Jewish usage, the word included the three righteous external acts—alms, prayer, and fasting alms to thy neighbour, prayer to God, fasting to thyself. The precept in this verse, including all these three, requires that they should be done with an eye to God alone, and not to man. *To be seen of men*—But are we not commanded to *let our light shine?* We are so; but the object and end, even then, are not to be *seen of men;* but the being seen of men is a mere means of inducing others to do likewise, and securing glory for God. The one terminates motive in man and his applause; the other terminates in God and his cause. And this answers the common cavils against the operations of public societies who publish their benefactions. *No reward of your Father*—You serve the eyes of men, and from men must be all your reward. Act for God's eye, and God will reward you. Human approbation is a good; a desire for it has its proper place. But it is not its right to fill the place of God's approbation.

2. *When thou doest thine alms*—With a delicate reference to the secresy and individuality enjoined, our Lord changes the plural pronoun *ye* of the last verse to the more pointed *thou*. Do *thou* thus, personally and alone.

Be it here marked that our Lord presupposes that *alms* would be given. Even fallen Judaism was liberal to God and the poor. The extravagance of the present day, lavish of showy expense, has but a small surplus to spare for charities and liberalities. The Jew gave one tenth of his income; the Christian generally cannot give the hundredth part, since he needs it to supply rich furniture, personal pleasures, and investments for future profit!

Sound a trumpet—Symbol for making a great display to attract attention

trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself [a] shall reward thee openly.

5 ¶ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the [b] hypocrites *are:* for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest,

a Luke 14. 14.——*b* Job 27. 8, 10; Isa. 1. 15; Luke 18. 10, 11; 20. 47.

There is no proof of the existence among the Jews of the practice of blowing a trumpet in almsgiving. *Their reward*—The applause of men which they seek, and the disapprobation of God whom they mock.

3. *Left hand*—If it had perception. A striking symbol of secrecy. "The right hand," says Mr. Roberts in his Oriental Illustrations, "always dispenses gifts because 'it is more honourable than the other;' the left hand, therefore, was to be unacquainted with the charities of the other; that is, there was to be no ostentation; to be perfect secrecy. The Hindoos say of things which are not to be revealed: 'The left ear is not to hear that which went into the right, nor the right to be acquainted with that which was heard by the left.'"

4. *In secret*—Literally *in the secret place.* God seeth that *secret place,* and shall reward thee in the open place. Thy good deeds were covered; thy reward shall be before assembled worlds. *Shall reward thee*—The great principle of reward for good works done with the pure eye to God alone, seems almost forgotten. The fear of claiming merit for our good works and deeds of righteousness for God, has become extreme. Yet evangelically, and by the great condescension of God, a merit, at least a rewardableness, is attributed to deeds of goodness, performed from a right heart, for God. The dollar, nay, the cent, given for Christ from a love for Christ, is an investment which he will repay with an eternal interest.

b. Sincerity in prayer.

5. *Prayest*—From sincerity in alms our Lord proceeds to sincerity in prayer. *Hypocrites*—The Greek word is, literally, *play actors.* These anciently not only acted a part, but wore a mask. Hence they became a symbol of persons who assumed a false character, especially in religion. *Standing*—A usual posture of the Jews in prayer. The early Christians followed a more uniform practice of kneeling. See Acts ix, 40; xx, 36. The posture is not essential, but so far as the act is significant, kneeling is assuredly the more reverential. Dr. Thomson says of the Moslem prayers: "I would be glad to believe there was ordinarily any corresponding moral and religious feeling connected with this exterior manifestation of devotion. The Moslems themselves, however, have no such idea. They are rather afraid of any one who is especially given to prayer—their prayers, I mean. They have a proverb: 'If your neighbour has made the pilgrimage to Mecca once, watch him; if twice, avoid his society; if three times, move into another street.'"

Corners of the streets—Where streets intersected and so brought large crowds. The Jerusalem Talmud is quoted as saying: "Rabbi Janai stood and prayed in the corner of the street Trippor, repeating an additional prayer at each of the four corners."

6. *Closet*—The word primarily signifies *a locker,* or fastened store-room Hence any private close apartment or chamber. *Symbol* for any secret retreat. But not only may we be in our

[c] enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, [d] use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do:* [e] for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: [f] Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

c Gen. 32. 24, 29; 2 Kin. 4. 33; Isa. 26. 20; John 1. 48.

d Ecc. 5. 2.—*e* 1 Kin. 18. 26, 29.—*f* Luke 11. 2, &c.

closet; our closet may be in us. The innermost prayer of the heart, though in a dense crowd, may be truly the closet prayer. *Shut thy door*—As our Lord is here prescribing a mode of action in opposition to the conduct of the ostentatious hypocrite of his day, he lays a special emphasis upon the particular points of difference. For this reason it is that he specifies the closet and the shutting of the door. These are the symbols of unostentatious devotion. They are not, therefore, to be interpreted materially and mechanically. The pure thought is—Perform thy religious duties for God's eye and not for man's.

7. *Vain repetitions*—The second caution in regard to prayer. Vain repetition, in the Greek, *battologia.* The word is derived by an ancient lexicographer from Battus, a poet, who composed hymns full of repetitions. More probably, however, the word is made from the sound, like such words as *tattle* and *clatter.* The repetitions of a fervent heart are not condemned; but the parrot-like recitation of heartless phrases, as if the mere saying of them over would be a merit. So the Papists prescribe Pater Nosters to be repeated, and beads to be counted. Of the repetitions of modern Orientals, Dr. Thomson says: "They are obliged to repeat some expressions thirty times; others many hundred times. Would that these remarks did not apply to nominal Christians in this land as well as to Moslems!" *Much speaking*—Instead of sincere speaking. Our Saviour is not condemning perseverance in prayer. On the contrary, he ofter prayed himself all night. *As the heathen do*—Our Lord will deal with heathenism in a later part of the discourse. But, alas! there is much of heathenism in Judaism.

9. *After this manner*—Our Lord now proceeds to give an outline model of prayer, in which is not one word of irrational babble or cant repetition; but in which human wants are condensed and expressed, and human devotions shaped in terms so direct, so simple, so pure, that sinner or saint, philosopher or child, may understand and use them.

There is no ground for saying that this formula, called our Lord's Prayer, was selected by him from Jewish forms. No doubt it embodies petitions used in essence by the Old Testament saints of all ages. But it was cast fully and truly in the mould of his own divine mind. It has a heaven-born originality.

In Luke xi. 2, Jesus says: "When ye pray, *say,* Our Father," etc. Hence there can be no doubt that this was intended as a fixed form of prayer. As such it formed a model for our prayer in general. It is a recorded summary for the Church in all ages of the permanent objects of prayer. It is the condensation and nucleus of all Christian supplication. It has ever served to limit the range of Christian devotion. It is proper, therefore, to be usually repeated in our public service, though not to the exclusion of all other prayer. And it is delightful to feel that it has served to establish a harmony of prayer among true saints through all the world.

Hence, with propriety our Church does use a ritual of forms of prayers

inasmuch as the essential identity of prayers should be traditionally preserved from generation to generation; but not to the suppression of extemporaneous prayers, lest the free action of the soul in prayer should be hampered and gradually suppressed.

The structure of our Lord's Prayer may be best presented by the following form:

Our Father which art in heaven,

I. *a.* Hallowed be thy name.

b. Thy kingdom come.

c. Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

II. *a.* Give us this day our daily bread.

b. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

c. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.

On which we may remark,

1. It begins with an address, and ends with an ascription.

2. Between these are included two sets of threes. The first set is three celestial, and the second three terrestrial petitions. The three celestial petitions pray for the sanctification of God's name, the coming of his kingdom, and a universal submission to it.

The terrestrial petitions pray for livelihood, pardon of past sin, and deliverance from committing future sin.

3. The ascription attributes to God three excellencies in kingdom, power, and glory. But we are bound to add that the genuineness of this ascription, as a part of the sacred text, is, in the judgment of critics, more than doubtful.

4. It may also be said that the address implies three subjects: God, his abode, and us, his children.

The first three petitions embrace, or imply, all we need pray for apart from ourselves; the last three all that we need pray for ourselves individually and collectively.

The following comparison will show that all its doctrines are contained in the Old Testament:

Our Father which art in heaven: Isa. lxiv, 8: "O Lord, thou art our Father." Ecc. v, 2: "God is in heaven."

Hallowed be thy name: Psa. xlviii, 10: "According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth."

Thy kingdom come: Psa. xxii, 28: "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations." Dan. ii, 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed."

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven: Psa. xl, 8: "I delight to do thy will, O my God." Psa. ciii, 20: "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word."

Give us this day our daily bread: Prov. xxx, 8: "Feed me with food convenient for me."

And forgive us our debts: Exod. xxxiv, 9: "Pardon our iniquity and our sin."

As we forgive our debtors: Lev. xix, 18: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord."

And lead us not into temptation: Gen. xxii, 1: "And it came to pass, after these things, that God did tempt Abraham."

But deliver us from evil: Psa. l, 15. "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen: 1 Chron. xxix, 11: "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all."

Our Father—Against Atheism, which teaches that there is no God; against Pantheism, that teaches that God is not a person, but identical with nature; against Epicurism, which teaches that God cares nothing for his creation; against Polytheism, which teaches that there are many gods, our Saviour teaches that our one God is a tender and gracious parent, who knows our wants and listens to our prayers

10 Thy kingdom come. [h] Thy will be done in earth, [i] as *it is* in heaven.

11 Give us this day our [j] daily bread.

h Chapter 26. 39, 42; Acts 21. 14.——*i* Psalm 103. 20.——*j* Job 23. 12; Proverbs 30. 8.——*k* Chapter 18. 21, &c.——*l* Chapter 26. 41; Luke 22. 40, 46;

Which art in heaven—And so infinitely superior to any father we have on earth. God, though omnipresent, is said to be *in heaven*. Whether there be a locality in the universe where God is specially and peculiarly resident, is more than we can say. Astronomers do conceive there to be a centre of the system of astronomic worlds: and that centre may be the capitol of the universe, "the third heaven, where God resides." But at any rate, all human language, and human conception, contemplate God as *above* and man *below*. That is, we look *from the earth* for the Divine; *to the earth* for the human. *Hallowed*—Held sacred. *Thy* very *name*, and so thy *self* be most profoundly revered.

10. *Thy kingdom*—Thy *dominion* over all hearts and souls. *Come*—By our willing submission to it, and by its universal spread. In this petition, *truly* offered, we do truly submit to God; we do truly give him our hearts, and are consequently truly Christians. *Thy will be done*—Thy laws be obeyed; thy commandments be executed. A class of commentators make a distinction, for which there is little ground, between the revealed will and the secret will of God. Thus Professor Owen, in his Commentary, says: "His secret will or purpose is being accomplished at all times and in all places of his dominion." If this be true, then all the vices, crimes, and abominations of fiends and the most wicked wretches, though forbidden by the law of God, are in accordance with "his secret will!" What is this, but to make a hypocrite of the most holy God? What is it, but to make him will the wickedness of the sinner, that he may damn him? What is it, but to make God the original determiner of all sin; and therefore the responsible author of all sin; and therefore, again, the only real sinner in the universe?

12 And [k] forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 [l] And lead us not into temptation, but [m] deliver us from evil: [n] For thine is the

1 Corinthians 10. 13; 2 Peter 2. 9; Revelation 3. 10.——*m* John 17. 15.——*n* 1 Chronicles 29. 11

In earth as it is in heaven—And thereby men would be as obedient as angels, and the earth would be a counterpart of heaven.

The phrase, *in earth*, clearly indicates the expectation that obedience to God's will, bringing on the coming of his kingdom, should overspread the earth. This universal hope is placed in the very body of this universal prayer. It is instinct with the very life of missionary enterprise. That kingdom is to be introduced, not by the convulsion of the world's dissolution, but by the submission of all hearts to its extending sway. The Church, therefore, cannot pray this clause of the divine prayer in the full spirit of its power, without becoming a missionary Church. In this petition is the concentrated germ of all holy enterprise, of all aggressive energy, of all Christian sacrifice, for the conversion of men, for the blessing of the race, and for the recalling of an apostate world to God.

11. *Daily bread*—Including all the *needs* of life.

12. *Debts*—As by our offences we *owe* satisfaction, so they are all *debts*. In business we incur *debts* of money; in morals we incur debts of reparation. In the former debts we pay coin; in the latter we pay in suffered penalty or atonement. So *due penalty* is often treated in Scripture as a *debt*. *Forgive us our debts*—Remit the penalty of our offences, and hold us as if we had not sinned

13. *Lead us not into temptation*—Bring us not into trials that may endanger our souls. This prayer is, however, to be uttered with submission to whatever trials of our virtue God pleases. And hence our Lord immediately adds, *deliver us from evil*—as much as to say,

kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

14 °For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But ᵖif ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 ¶ Moreover ᵠ when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, ʳanoint thine head, and wash thy face;

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

o Mark 11. 25, 26; Eph. 4. 32; Col. 3. 13.
p Chap. 18. 35; James 2. 13.

q Isaiah 58. 5.—r Ruth 3. 3; Daniel 10. 3.

If thou dost lead us into dangers to our virtue, give us strength to overcome.

The evil here named does not mean simply the Evil One; but all *evil*, including all sin and hell as well as the devil.

All this prayer and submission we offer to thee, O God, *for thine* is every supreme excellence; namely, the wide *kingdom* of the world, the absolute *power* over it, and the *glory* of all thine own attributes, of all thy vast monarchy, and of all its grand events and results. *Amen*—So let it be. It has the entire consent of our own hearts.

15. *Forgive not . . . neither*—See on Matt. xviii, 35. Our Saviour adds this to impress the sincerity of the petition upon our hearts.

c. Sincerity in fasting.

16. *Moreover*—Be not only thus sincere in alms and prayer, but also in fasting. Put on no grim airs to attract attention, but fast unto God.

Of a sad countenance—Solemn thought naturally indeed produces a solemn expression of countenance. Penitence may produce tears. And all this is right, provided the external expression is produced by the internal feeling before God. Nay, one may put on sackcloth and ashes, or use other means to bring his feelings to the right state. But to assume expressions, or put on forms, for the purpose of a show where the reality is not within, is simply hypocrisy. Forms, indeed, are often in a degree deserted by the feeling they express; and yet they are well retained to keep us in that way by which the feeling may be made to return, so that the form may become reanimated by the power. But when the form has banished the power, and become a substitute for it and a mere show of it, the hypocrisy has fairly commenced.

17. *Anoint thine head, and wash thy face*—As these were the customary daily dressings of the Jews, our Lord, in the words, directs them to use their ordinary modes when fasting. Of course here is no reducing the practice of anointing the head to a universal Christian command.

The practice of anointing with oil as an inauguration of kings and priests, has already been mentioned. Matt. i, 1. But there were also *anointings* of guests, of the sick, and of the dead. The practice is extremely ancient; as there appear, even upon the monuments of ancient Egypt, figures in the act of pouring oil upon the head of a person sitting or standing before them. This use of oil in the dry climate of the East is supposed to impart softness and brilliancy to the skin, to prevent the weakening effects of too much perspiration, and to impart to the person health and beauty. Hence, it becomes the emblem of joy and gladness, of excellence and blessing, of divine favour and distinction, of royalty and priesthood. Hence, in periods of symbolical sorrow,

19 ¶ [s]Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 [t]But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

s Prov. 23. 4; 1 Tim. 6. 17; Heb. 13. 5; James 5. 1, &c.

t Chap. 19. 21; Luke 12. 33, 34; 18. 22; 1 Tim. 6. 19; 1 Pet. 1. 4.

of mourning, penitence, and fasting, the Jews abjured the use of oil.

III. CHRISTIAN PIETY DISTINGUISHED FROM GENTILISM, vi, 19–vii, 27.

Fallen Judaism is the impure service of the true God; Gentilism is the true service of a false god. That god is the world-god Mammon. Gentilism has lost its divine parent; it has become orphaned of our Father who is in heaven. In his place it has substituted the Mammon service and the earthly goods. *After all these things do the Gentiles seek.* Verse 32.

It is perfectly plain that with verse 18 our Lord closes his treatment of fallen Judaism. Thereafter he takes a wider scope over the world, and treats, throughout the remainder of the chapter, upon the world-wide substitution of the earthly good for the heavenly good, (19–23,) of the rivalry of Mammon before the heavenly Father, (24,) and the dominion of Care in the place of the kingdom or dominion of God over us. (25–30.) He calls us back beneath the paternity of God, promising that if we will make him our sole Supreme, all earthly goods shall be subordinately added.

1. *Our treasure not on earth, but in heaven.*

19. *Treasures*—The first thought of a superficial reader of these words is likely to be, that our Saviour actually forbids all acquirement of wealth or property, real or personal. And objectors to the Scriptures endeavour to maintain this as the true construction, and so to prove that Jesus teaches a monkish kind of piety. But, *first*, it is to be marked that the very basis on which our Lord gives this precept presupposes that earthly goods are good in their place. His doctrine is that, if we *seek first* the higher good, *all these things*, constituting the lower good, *shall be* subordinately *added unto* us. ver. 33. And, *second*, the word *treasures* does not mean simply *riches*. The term is not to be literally limited to material wealth alone, but is a symbol for whatever we hold to be our *main good*, whatever has our predominant affection, whatever is our *aim of life*. The sentiment, then, is, Make heavenly, not earthly good supreme in your heart. So also *moth*, *rust*, and *thieves* are symbols of whatever can destroy our treasures. If our treasures are wealth, riches take wings and fly away; if beauty, disease may impair it; if learning, idiocy; if strength, paralysis; if talent, insanity, and of all our *treasures*, in whatever form, the grand thief is *death*.

For yourselves—Making gratification of *self* your end.

Moth—The moth is a worm which breeds in neglected clothes, eats their substance, and destroys their texture. So Isa. l, 9; li, 8; Ecc. xix, 3. *Rust*—Corrosion, or wear and tear of any kind. *Corrupt*—Destroy.

20. *Treasures in heaven*—The use of the word *treasures* here shows that its sense is symbolical for that which is our highest interest. *For yourselves*—This treasure may, indeed, be *for yourselves*. Earthly good is transient; you are a mere momentary holder, and not an owner. But heavenly treasures become your own forever

21. *Where your treasure is, there.. heart*—If your treasure is earthly, your heart is earthly.

Now, our Lord condemns no true earthly good, no true earthly enjoyment; he simply claims that in these shall not consist our *treasures;* and that all their value shall consist in their en-

22 [u]The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be [v]single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

24 ¶ [x]No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. [y]Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, [z]Take no thought for your life,

u Luke 11. 34, 35, 36.—v 2 Cor. 11. 3; Eph. 6. 5. w Luke 16. 13.

x Gal. 1. 10; 1 Tim. 6. 17; James 4. 4; 1 John 2. 15. z Psa. 55. 22; Luke 12. 22; Phil. 4. 6; 1 Pet. 5. 7.

abling us to be better servants of God and winners of the true treasures. For this purpose a *single eye* is necessary, as shown in the next two verses.

22. *Light of the body is the eye*—The body is as a large room, naturally dark, of which the inhabitant is the soul. But it has a light or lamp, *the eye;* for the eye gathers light from the external world of knowledge, and pours it, like a lamp, into the spacious residence of the soul. *Eye be single*—Or pure from any foreign substance, duplicating and impeding its clear blaze. *Body...light*—If the lamp give a pure *light*, the room is completely filled with illumination. When the moral perception is uninterfered with by any alloy of base self-interest, the soul possesses the pure light of truth.

23. *If thine eye be evil*—If the eye is evil by corrupting disease or foreign substance. *Darkness*—Of course a blind eye makes a dark body and soul. And morally, where the spiritual eye is disturbed and blinded by unholy motives and worldly self-interest, the soul is filled with darkness.

But the Jews were often inclined to struggle against this heathen world-worship; and so a rivalry and a compromise arose in their hearts between the world-god and the true God. Our Lord now meets this case.

2. *The world must not stand in competition with God*, 24–34.

24. *Two masters*—If the masters indeed agree perfectly, it is essentially one master. But here *two* signifies *opposing*. They are *two*, (as two masters ever will be,) not only in number, but in interest; and the poor slave or worshipper is under a conflicting jurisdiction, where one authority commands and another prohibits.

Mammon—There is no proof that Mammon was the name of a Syrian false god, or really an idol deity at all. Augustine says it is a Punic word signifying *gain*. The word was used in later and corrupt Hebrew for wealth. It is here personified by our Lord as the rival to the true God—an antigod of this world. He is the supreme Dollar of the day.

Hate...love—In the heart. *Hold to ...despise*—In the external conduct. Either in heart, or in action, or both, one of the masters will be sole master. *Serve*—As a slave or a worshipper. You cannot *serve* both; but you may make God your Lord, and Mammon your servant.

But if God alone must be worshipped, and Mammon despised, what will become of our support for life?

Our Lord now meets the question. Be not anxious about the matter; the *duty* is your part, the *care* is God's. He who has adjusted his providential care to the bird, (which, indeed, hunts his food, yet lives by faith,) and to the lily, (that, indeed, struggles to gather moisture, and yet depends on God to paint her texture,) will also adjust his care for *you*, his chosen servants. Perform, indeed, every duty in the world; then leave all the care to God, and rise to the true dignity of the true man of faith, who brings the world beneath his feet and sets God above all. This is the true place of human excellence and of divine *repose*.

what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 [a]Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you [b]by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

a Job 38. 41; Psa. 147. 9; Luke 12. 24, &c.

b Eccl. 3. 14; 1 Cor. 12. 18.

25. *Therefore*—Since it is God's part, like a true master, to care for us. *Take no thought*—This rendering of the Greek, (*μεριμνα, merimna*, distraction, distrust,) is in itself too strong. The Greek word is derived from the verb *μερίζω, merizo, to divide*, and implies the distraction of mind between different feelings; or rather, between the true God and the world-god of Gentilism. Let there be no half-and-half distraction of your mind between the two masters, by which anxiety for worldly good shall prevent your complete trust in God. Your anxiety is just so much belief that wealth is safer than God, and Mammon a better master than Christ.

What ye shall eat—The questions here condemned should be carefully understood. They are not the questions asked by a housewife who has a dinner to provide to-day; nor the questions of an industrious householder who has a family to feed. These provident queries are a rightful *duty*, and to furnish the solid answer is its proper *performance*. The prohibited questions ask not properly *how* shall I be supplied, but shall I be supplied at all. The questions thus prohibited are questions of infidel distrust asked by a Mammon worshipper, who is called upon to become a man of faith, but is afraid he will thereby lose his earthly living. For all these distrusts our Lord is about to furnish the true, magnanimous, consoling answer. Venture the holy investment; trust in God, and do duty. *Life...meat ...body...raiment*—Will not he who gave the better, furnish also the inferior? If God gave life and body, will he not give food and raiment?

26. *Fowls of the air*—They do their part, and God takes care of the rest. Hence we have not an unintelligent fate, or a blind chance to deal with; but a heavenly Father, who knows his children, and how to provide for them The birds of heaven shall teach you to live by faith.

27. *Add one cubit to his stature*—To provide food and to eat food is man's duty; to regulate the digestive process, the growth, the size, comes within the prerogative of God. We can do our part, and God takes *care* of the rest.

The word *cubit* (Latin, *cubitus*) signifies primarily the human arm, from the elbow to the end of the longest finger. This part of the human frame (like the *foot*) became, very anciently, a *measure* of external objects. The ancient Egyptian cubit was six handbreadths, or two *spans*, a span being the measure from the end of the thumb to the end of the little finger of the extended hand. These are somewhat variable measures, but the cubit was about eighteen inches.

Some have rendered the word *stature* here by the word *life*, and would improve the meaning by making our Lord ask whether we can add a cubit to life—a very odd phrase indeed. Dr. Stier, in his learned work, The Words of Jesus, supposes himself to have settled the question in favour of this meaning by showing that in verses 26, 27 our Lord illustrates the *life* alone, and in verses 28–30 the *body* alone. This is true; but it proves just the reverse of Dr. Stier's conclusions. The body, as the subject of clothing only, is spoken of in 28–30. In 27 the life is, indeed, the subject, but the life as developing the growth and stature attained. The Greek word for stature does not properly signify *life*, except as measured by the growth. It is derived from a word signifying *how great*, and the ref-

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That [c]even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, [d]O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, [e]What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that

c 1 Kings 10. 5, 7; 2 Chron. 9. 4, 6.—*d* Mark 4. 40; Heb. 3. 12.

e Leviticus 25. 30; Psalm 37. 3; 55. 22; 1 Peter 5. 7.

erence to size and growth is never lost from the word. Cubit is a very uncommon measurement of time, though the ordinary one of stature. The obvious meaning is, man may provide food, but God regulates the growth.

Upon the phraseology of this verse Mr. Roberts remarks: "This form of speech is sometimes used to humble those of high pretensions. Thus a man of low caste who has become rich, and who assumes authority over his better born though poor neighbours, will be asked: 'What, has your money made you a cubit higher?' that is, in the scale of being. Is a man ambitious of rising in society? a person who wishes to annoy him will put his finger to his elbow, and showing him that part to the tip of the middle finger, ask: 'Friend, will you ever rise thus much [a cubit] after all your cares?' 'Yes, yes; the low caste thinks himself a cubit taller, because he has got the favour of the king.'"

28. *Lilies*—The *Amaryllis lutea* has been supposed to be the flower here specified, which is described as affording "one of the most brilliant and gorgeous objects in nature." But Dr. Royle (Kitto's Cyc.) decides it to be the *Lilium Chalcedonicum*, a flower marked for its showy splendour. Observe, the birds illustrate the precept in regard to *food*, the lilies in regard to *raiment*.

30. *Cast into the oven*—As a fuel, after it has become withered and dry. In the word *grass*, here, the lilies mentioned in a previous verse are included. These, and all other grown vegetables, such as the withered stalks of herbs and flowers, the tendrils of vines, the small branches of myrtle and rosemary, and other plants, are, in the East, where fire-wood is scarce, the fuel for the ovens or fire. See following illustration.

32. *After all these things*—All worldly goods and earthly *treasures*, (18–21,) which are included under the dominion of the world-god, Mammon. And so, be not ye, therefore, like unto them. Their god is Mammon, yours is your heavenly Father. *The Gentiles seek*—Hence this whole third part of our Lord's discourse is properly a rebuke of Gentilism, or godless Secularism, either

ye have need of all these things.

33 But [f] seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

[f] See 1 Kings 3. 12, 13; Psa. 37. 25; Mark 10. 30; Luke 12. 31; 1 Tim. 4. 8.

as existing among the heathen, or infecting the Jews.

33. *Seek*—The word is here emphatic, opposed to the *seek* of verse 32. After these things the Gentiles *seek*, first and supremely; just as you should *seek*, first and supremely, the kingdom of God. No one can read the history of heathen nations, especially the great nations of antiquity, in the right spirit, without perceiving their sad condition arising from their loss of the proper knowledge of the Fatherhood of God. Losing all thought of his care, they cared supremely for themselves. They had nobody else to take care of them. Sordid, unscrupulous, and cruel selfishness was the result. No substitute for God was found in idolatry; for their idols, being the personification of their own passions, produced truly nothing but a self-worship, and so aggravated the evil. Against this whole system of Gentilism our Lord here raises the standard. Sons of men, *you have a Father in heaven;* relax this intense self-care; trust yourselves to him; know him as holy, and seek his righteousness; and so accepting his dominion, doubt not that all earthly goods shall be subordinately added unto you.

First the kingdom... added—We have here a summary of the whole requirement—God supreme and earth subordinate; his kingdom first, and all proper earthly good as an appendix. He who does this will be religious first, industrious and prudent next, and will place faith in his heart, instead of care, finally.

Kingdom of God—That is, the dominion or supremacy of God. With your trust in God, obey the laws of God. He is holy; be ye, therefore, holy. And, as I am his messenger, speaking in his name, come ye out under my guidance from the kingdom of Gentilism into the kingdom of God.

All these things—All the things of Mammon that you need. Even in all true worldly good, God will be better than Mammon.

Shall be added unto you—So that, under all these prohibitions of anxious distrust, the blessed Jesus presupposes that there shall exist in our hearts a rightful, trusting care, and a provident thought for the true and temperate enjoyment of earthly good which shall be *added*, through our proper performance of duty, by our heavenly Father unto us. The interpretation which we have here given arises from the text, and completely repudiates and refutes the skeptical charge that our Lord teaches either a high impracticable morality, a monastic unworldliness, or a filthy, mendicant, idle life, like that of the friars of popery.

34. *Morrow... take thought*—The morrow is here finely personified. Do you take care for the morrow? Do duty for to-day and the morrow will be God's messenger, when it comes, to take care of you. *Day... evil thereof*—Do not bring to-morrow's trials into to-day; for to-day has its own sufficient concern, as to-morrow has its.

No man is so safe as the child of God. No man is bound to be so cheerful. If he rise into the true position of the man of faith, no one can be so fearless, so brave, so generous, so patient, so manly. Buoyancy is with him a duty, and despondency is a sin. Let him toil, for that is duty; but let no *care*, that is, *double-minded distrust*, cloud his brow, for that is usurping the prerogative of God. Let him earnestly labour, lavishly do good, serenely suffer, and great are his treasures above.

CHAPTER VII.

JUDGE [a] not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: [b] and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 [c] And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 ¶ [d] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast

a Luke 6. 37; Rom. 2. 1; 14. 3, 4, 10, 13; 1 Cor. 4. 3, 5; James 4. 11, 12.—*b* Jer. 51. 24; Mark 4. 24; Luke 6. 38.—*c* Luke 6. 41, 42; 18. 11.—*d* Prov. 9. 7, 8; 23. 9; Acts 13. 45, 46.

CHAPTER VII.

2. *Supreme reverence for our heavenly Father as judge.*

In that kingdom which we are thus invited to *seek first* (vi, 32) and *enter*, (vii, 13,) we must never sit as judge, knowing that all our decisions will be rejudged, (1–6.)

(1.) Usurp not God's place as judge, 1–6.

1. *Judge not*—This command not to *judge* does not forbid us to *estimate* the characters of others, in order to regulate our own conduct. We are required so to *estimate* in verses 6 and 16, and a rule *how* to estimate is given. To *judge* is to estimate a man with a temper or in a mode in which we should think it unjust to be estimated ourselves. It is by this test that our Lord declares that all our estimates of others will be judged. We must make, then, precisely the application of the Golden Rule to the act and temper of our estimating the character of others. *That ye be not judged*—That is, by God, not by *others*. If God judge us for judging, we shall be condemned, as the next clause shows.

2. *Ye shall be judged*—We must take care that our judgments will stand this test, and all is right. *With what measure ye mete*—Our Lord here states the divine penalty for this unholy *judging*. It is the divine retribution symbolically stated in the terms of the *law of retaliation, like for like*. The unjust judge shall be paid off in unjust judgment. To the *froward* God will prove himself *froward*. Psalm xviii, 26. The sentiment literally is, *The wicked estimator shall be judged according to his evil action.*

3. *Mote...beam...eye*—The *mote* is a small *splinter*, and the *beam* is a whole *rafter*. The *eye* is the man's *judging* or *opining* faculty. The mote and the beam are the interferences to our seeing or judging things purely and fairly. *Thy brother's eye...thy own*—Thou perceivest on thy own selfish judgment-seat that thy brother has very absurd opinions; he sees things very strangely; it is because of that little splinter in his eye; take it out. Alas! there is no splinter there. What thou seest is only the image of a whole timber in thine own eye reflected into his. That timber is made by some moral mistake, some selfish passion of thine own. Perhaps when thou hast pitched the lumber out of thy own optics, thou wilt find the splinter gone from his.

6. *Dogs...swine*—Our Lord in these last verses has cautioned us how we hastily *judge* a good man, a *brother*. He now teaches us how to estimate the reverse character, or any character. The *dog* and the *swine* are symbols of depraved men, the *ferocious* and the *sensual*.

The *dogs* of the East, especially the street dogs, who have no owners, and exist in great hordes as a nuisance, are an abomination often mentioned in Scripture. The *swine*, ceremonially unclean by the Mosaic law, and physically filthy and disgusting to all view, prop-

ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

7 ¶ [e] Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For [f] every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

[e] Chap. 21. 22; Mark 11. 24; Luke 11. 9, 10; 18. 1; John 14. 13; 15. 7; 16. 23, 24; James 1. 5, 6; 1 John 3. 22; 5. 14, 15.—[f] Prov. 8. 17; Jer. 29. 12, 13.

orly comes in with the dog to represent conjointly the ferocious and the sensual.

Now we must discern these characters. We must not intrust a holy thing to a dog. Apostles and bishops must not commit the office of the ministry to a wicked man. No sacred deposit, or responsibility, or even principle (symbolized by *pearls*) must be imparted to an unfit man. No doctrines or religious experiences must be brought before an incapable sensualist. In fine, in imparting the official trusts and the truths of the Gospel, we must *discern* men's moral qualities, and deal with them accordingly.

In the latter part of the verse, the phrase, *lest they trample them under their feet*, refers to the *swine*. It describes the gross disregard which sensual men have for the most perfect gems of truth. *Turn again and rend you*, refers to the *dogs*. It alludes to the bitter irritation with which fierce natures treat the offers of truth to which they are opposed. Give the dog a pearl, and he will bite and tear you.

In regard to *pearls*, see note on Matt. xiii, 45.

(2.) Confide in God as a more than earthly father, 7–12.

In coming into the kingdom ye must entertain faith in God's paternity, (7–12;) ye must pass through the strait gate of life, (13–14;) ye must elude false guides, (15–20;) ye must show something more than mere profession, (21–23;) for by these my words you stand or fall, (24–29.)

7. *Ask, and it shall be given you*—Under the threefold symbol of *asking*, *seeking*, and *knocking*, all the expressions of our desire are included, rising in the force of climax. Our bounteous heavenly Father has a corresponding response for each. For the asking he has gifts; for the seeking, discovery; for the knocking, admissions.

8. *Asketh receiveth*—Coming into the kingdom of God, and under his paternity, we have the child's right of petition. Gifts, even the highest gift, his own Holy Spirit, and much more all lower gifts suitable for us, will he grant. And the only limitation of our asking is that we confine ourselves to the proper relation of the child; and the only limitation of the gift, and so of the promise, is that God will give only what is suitable to his character as Father to grant. The child cannot expect to *command* favours out of his proper sphere, or at the improper time. Of these the parent is the wise judge. So the child of the heavenly Father must not interpret this promise licentiously, as if God would obey his orders at the moment he chooses. The promise only affirms that, unlike the Gentile, he enjoys the privileges of accepted prayer, and receives the returns that the infinite Father sees best.

Seeketh findeth—To *seek* is a stronger act than to *ask*. Not everything is obtained by the means and at the moment of uttered supplication. What we are to *seek first*, we are told in chap. vi, 33. It is the kingdom of God and his righteousness, in opposition to all those things which the *Gentiles seek*, verse 32. And in that kingdom, revelations of wisdom and goodness, of experience and attainment, are granted to him who earnestly employs his day and strength in *seeking*. *Knock...opened*—And this completes the climax. Knock, and the *strait gate* (verse 14) and the narrow way shall be opened unto you. And if we continue to knock through

9 [g]Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, [h]being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things [1]whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for [k]this is the law and the prophets.

13 ¶ [l]Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 [1]Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

15 ¶ [m]Beware of false proph-

g Luke 11. 11, 12. 13.—*h* Gen. 6. 5; 8. 21. *i* Luke 6. 31.—*k* Lev. 19. 18; chap. 22. 40; Rom. 13. 8–10; Gal. 5. 14; 1 Tim. 1. 5.—*l* Luke 13. 24.

1 Or, *How.*—*m* Deut. 13. 3; Jer. 23. 16; chap. 24. 5, 24; Mark 13. 22; Rom. 16. 17; Eph. 5. 6 Col. 2. 8; 2 Pet. 2. 1–3; 1 John 4. 1.

life, the heavenly kingdom above will open its everlasting doors. Those, indeed, there will be who will *begin to stand* without *and to knock at the door*, (Luke xiii, 25,) and the voice of the Lord will pierce through the door still closed, saying, Depart. There are Gentiles in heathendom that know not the heavenly Father, and Gentiles in Christendom that know not the Son.

9. *Man...son*—An argument from less to greater. How much more beneficent than human father is God to all the sons of God!

9, 10. *Bread...fish*—The ordinary food of the fishermen of Galilee was bread and fish. Bread and stone, fish and serpent, are in couples, obviously founded on a degree of resemblance.

11. *Being evil*—Evil of course, because human. What is man that he should be clean? Even in those tender relations and feelings that are supposed to be the best part of our nature, alas! we are still *evil*.

12. *Therefore*—Inasmuch as you expect to be well treated by your heavenly Parent, as your children are well treated by you, generalize this rule of reciprocity. Benefit not only your children, as you would be parentally benefited; but treat all as you would be treated.

That is, *whatsoever*, as a fair and righteous man, *ye would* have from others. *That do* to others. What you feel would be right for you in their place, that concede ye to them in their own place. Make their case your own, and think what you could then fairly demand. *Law and the prophets*—Our Saviour does not claim this to be a new, but an old rule. It is a condensation of the principles of the Old Testament. It is a divine ratification of the law written upon the human heart. It has been repeatedly expressed by various moralists in different ages with more or less completeness. It is, indeed, the central axiom of right, the divine concentration of human morality, the test of social justice, the truly GOLDEN RULE.

(3.) Enter the strait gate, avoiding false guides, 13–20.

13. *Enter...strait gate...wide the gate—Strait* and *narrow* here are the exact opposites of *wide* and *broad*. Like a close portal, from which a narrow path leads to a magnificent palace, is the Gospel way to everlasting life. Like a broad, open archway, through which a magnificent thoroughfare, well trodden and popular, leads to the precipice of *destruction*, is the way of sin.

14. *Few there be that find it*—They do not look for it. They see the crowd rushing through the broad gate; they desire nothing better than so liberal a route, and they would not press through the narrow way if before their eyes.

15. *False prophets*—Who would, like

ets, [n]which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are [o]ravening wolves.

16 [p]Ye shall know them by their fruits. [q]Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so [r]every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 [s]Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

21 ¶ Not every one that saith unto me, [t]Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we [u]not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And [x]then will I profess

n Micah 3. 5; 2 Timothy 3. 5.——*o* Acts 20. 29. *p* ver. 20; chap. 12. 33.——*q* Luke 6. 44.——*r* Jer. 11. 19; chap. 12. 33; Gal. 5. 22, 24; Eph. 5. 9; Phil. 1. 11; Col. 1. 10.——*s* Chap. 3. 10; Luke 3. 9; John 15. 2, 6.——*t* Hos. 8. 2; chap. 25. 11, 12; Luke 6. 46; 13. 25; Acts 19. 13; Rom. 2. 13; James 1. 22. *u* Num. 24. 4; John 11. 51; 1 Cor. 13. 2.——*x* Chap. 25. 12; Luke 13. 27; 2 Tim. 2. 19.

false guides, lead you from the strait gate.

Sheep's clothing—*Symbol* of a professional and merely external holiness. *Wolves*—Symbol of doctrinaries, who destroy the souls of men by error and vice.

16. *Know them*—It is all important for us to know them, and hence a plain test is given. *Their fruits*—Their own actions and the moral tendency of their doctrines.

17, 18. *Good tree...good fruit...corrupt tree...evil fruit*—As the corruption of the tree lies back of the evil fruit, so the corruption of the man's nature lies back of his evil doings. Corruption, depravity, then, lies not, as some teach, merely in the *actions*, but in the *nature back of the actions*. Bad actions usually grow out of a bad nature.

19. *Hewn down*—See note on iii, 10.

(4.) Mere profession no assurance in judgment, 21–23.

21. *Not every one*—Our Lord takes a farther step toward the time of final discrimination.

22. *Say to me in that day*—What day but the final judgment? *Lord, Lord*—The officious service of the lips. No high profession, no baptismal ordinance, no Church membership, no ministerial garb, no pulpit popularity, not even revivals under our labours, are sure tests of our acceptance at the final judgment.

Prophesied—As the whole Gospel is a real prophecy, foretelling the vast futures of the human race—death, judgment, and eternity, so every preacher is a prophet. Here, then, are preachers who plead their ministry in vain *in that day*. *Cast out devils*—Their ministry had converted men's souls, casting out Satan from their hearts. How sad a case is his who saves others while himself he fails to save! *Wonderful works*—Great revivals of religion! Surely these ought to save the man! Not if his own heart was false. He may have preached truth enough to save his own soul, and God blessed many who obeyed the truth from his false lips; but he obeyed not the truth he preached. He showed the way to heaven, but went not himself. Among the mighty works he wrought, his own salvation was not one.

23. *I never knew you*—They belong not to the *apostate* class; but are either self-deceivers, or juggling deluders of

unto them, I never knew you: [y] depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 ¶ Therefore [z] whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, [a] and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, [b] the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29 [c] For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

y Psa. 5. 5; 6. 8; chap 25. 41.——*z* Luke 6. 47, 48, 49.——*a* 1 Sam. 2. 30; Prov. 14. 1; Jer. 8. 9; Luke 6. 49; James 2. 20.——*b* Chap. 13. 54; Mark 1. 22; 6. 2; Luke 4. 32.——*c* John 7. 46.

others, of whom Simon Magus was father. *Depart from me*—You belong to the dark side of the universe. *Work iniquity*—Though *professors* of righteousness, they were workers of iniquity. According to the test given in 15–20, their *fruits* condemned them.

(5.) We stand only by obedience to Christ's words, 24–27.

Our Lord now arrives at the final consummation to which the whole discourse has tended. So the judgment is the final consummation of all the world's history.

26. *Heareth...doeth not*—It is not the mere hearing, nor *believing*, but the *doing these sayings* which places our house upon the rock. Faith cometh, indeed, by *hearing;* but faith must be justified by *works.*

27. Our Lord gives a vivid contrast in the pictures of the rock-founded and sand-founded house, drawn from the natural scenes of Palestine. It is the *foundation* that is the main thing. The house built upon the rock could not be undermined; but the light structure erected upon the beach, when the windy storms poured *down* and swelled the floods *around* it, soon found its base gliding from under it. *Great was the fall*—"The fishermen of Bengal," says Mr. Ward, in his View of the Hindoos, "build their huts in the dry season on the bed of sand from which the river has retired. When the rains set in, which they do often very suddenly, accompanied with violent northwest winds, the water pours down in torrents from the mountains. In one night multitudes of these huts are frequently swept away, and the place where they stood is the next morning undiscoverable."

28. *Jesus...ended...people...astonished*—Truly might they wonder at one who claimed that he was their final judge.

29. *Having authority*—Not relying on rabbis, or elders, or prophets, or even upon Moses; but as one greater than they all. The authority, original and unappealable, resided in his own Divine person.

The Sermon on the Mount contains a summary of all the great moral principles and cardinal doctrines of the Gospel, except the atonement. His own divinity, as the superior of Moses and the final judge of men, is fully asserted; man's fallen and evil nature, the needs of the Holy Spirit to salvation, the duty and success of prayer for its bestowment, are affirmed; faith in Christ as the only rock of safety, the necessity of renouncing self and the world, and giving ourselves by faith to God, whereby we may be regenerated into sons of God, are plentifully explained; holiness

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 [a]And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

a Mark 1. 40, &c.

Luke 5. 12, &c.

of heart, Christian perfection, purity, are described and required in explicit terms; probation, the final judgment, and everlasting retribution, are depicted in the clearest colours; and though the CROSS is not fully presented, yet that spirit of faith is powerfully inculcated, by which the cross, in the fulness of time, would be embraced with full purpose of heart.

The wonderful reports in regard to Jesus had drawn the multitudes from various parts to hear him. (iv, 25.) As Jesus arose and walked down the mountain toward Capernaum "*great multitudes followed him.*" (viii, 1.) How much, in regard to the *Messiah*, they understood, is not clear; but it cannot be doubted that many a heart was beginning to open with receptive faith for his religion. Alas! how may counter influences blast the fairest hopes!

CHAPTER VIII.

TEN MIRACLES are now narrated by Matthew in the following two chapters; not arranged in chronological order, but selected, apparently, as specimens of the Saviour's divine works. In the Sermon on the Mount, in the last three chapters, our Lord is exhibited as teacher; in these chapters he is presented as a performer of those works by which the divinity of his teachings is demonstrated. Of these TEN, five are narrated in this chapter, as follows: 1. The cleansing of the leper; 2. Healing of the centurion's servant; 3. Curing Peter's wife's mother of a fever; 4. Stilling the tempest; 5. Dispossessing the two demoniacs of Gadara.

1. *Come down...mountain*—He descended the slope toward the shores of Gennesaret, where stood Capernaum, his present residence. *Great multitudes followed*—His vast congregation moved with the preacher toward the city. See the closing comment on last chapter.

§ 29.—FIRST MIRACLE—CLEANSING THE LEPER, 2–4.

2. *Behold...a leper*—A living instance of the receptive faith alluded to in the closing lines of our comment on the last chapter, now steps forward in the person of a leper. How do afflictions sometimes urge us to Christ! The leper, who had, perhaps, been in the outskirts of the congregation, had seen his works and heard his words of mercy, comes with the language of humility and confession on his lips.

Leprosy, in its worst form, was one of the most terrible of diseases. It began with red spots upon the body, grouped in circles, and covered with a shiny scale or scab. It became, generally, incurable, and so corrupted the system that it became hereditary for generations. The body crumbled, the limbs fell apart, and the man literally went to pieces.

Yet it seems not to have been clearly contagious. Hence Mr. Trench forcibly argues that all the provisions made against it by Moses, placing its examination under the care of the priest, and exiling the man, when clearly a leper, from society, were established as a matter of ceremonial *uncleanness*. To impress the lesson of the corruption of sin upon men, the touch of a dead body and every contact with the circumstantials of death, rendered a man *unclean*. From among diseases, leprosy was selected as the emblem of moral uncleanness, and subjected to priestly examinations, to banishment, and to every abhorrence which could indicate his utter moral defilement. Lev. xiv, xv. All this arose, not from the special wickedness of the man himself, but to present him as a physical representative of the depravity belonging to our inmost nature.

Worshipped—The word may signify the reverence paid either to a human

3 And Jesus [b]put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

b 2 Kings 5. 11.

4 And Jesus saith unto him, [c]See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that

c Chap. 9. 30; Mark 5. 43.

or to a divine being. Doubtless, sorrow had so subdued this poor leper, that he was ready to believe this benefactor to be either human or divine, as himself should claim. He could not, indeed, fully measure the amount of power or divinity residing in the Lord's person, and so his reverence was susceptible of any appropriate measure.

The *bowing* (called often *worshipping*) of the Oriental people is low and formal in proportion to the intended reverence paid. A simple inclination of the head is ordinary civility; a low and deliberate curve of the body indicated deep respect; a prostration, with the face upon the ground, was the most worshipful homage.

Lord—Similar varied meanings belong to this title. It may signify the same as our *Sir*, indicating the respect we pay to man; or it may be a most solemn compellative of God, answering to Jehovah itself.

3. *Touched him*—It was contrary to law to touch the unclean leper. But here was a finger which could contract no uncleanness; impurity fled from its approach; it purified what it touched.

Immediately his leprosy was cleansed—How sweet must have been the sensations of renewing health and wholeness. The crumbling limbs renew their shape, the blood flows quickly through the system, the eye recovers its brightness, and the voice its music. He stands up once more in his pure, vigorous manhood; and scarce can he wait the Lord's commands, before he must rush through the country, a living wonder, to tell the story of his salvation.

Contrary to the order of Harmonists generally, yet without making any alteration in the Synopsis, I have supposed in my notes upon this miracle, that it was performed in the order followed by Matthew, namely, immediately after the Sermon on the Mount. For proof that this is uncontradicted by either evangelist, see supplementary note, page 351.

4. *Tell no man*—Our Lord on many occasions forbade the subjects of his beneficent miracles to speak of them; and on others he directed them to be proclaimed abroad.

Readers are puzzled to know the reasons from which he acted. Perhaps the following views will make this clear: 1. Our Lord did not wish to avoid the full confession of his deeds of mercy on the part of their objects. This is fully illustrated in the case of the woman healed of the issue. See on Mark v, 33. 2. Why, in this case of the leper, and similar cases, he commanded silence, is fully and conclusively explained by Mark in his account of this miracle. The man cured of this leprosy *did not obey our Lord;* and the inconvenient consequences show what the evils were which our Lord wished to avoid. (Mark i, 45.) He went out and began to publish it loudly, *and to blaze abroad the matter*, insomuch that

[d]Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

5 ¶ [e]And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, [f]my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, [g]I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but [h]speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

d Leviticus 14. 4, 10; Luke 5. 14.—*e* Luke 7. 1, &c.—*f* Job 31. 13, 14; Acts 10. 7; Col. 3. 11; 4. 1; Philemon 16.—*g* Luke 15. 19, 21. *h* Psa. 107. 20.

Jesus *could no more enter into the city*, but was *without in desert places*. How our Lord was incommoded by crowds, will appear from many passages. See Mark iii, 9, 20. The thoughtless populace were, moreover, liable, in some fit of enthusiasm, to attempt to make him a temporal king, and so embroil him with the government. See notes on Matt. xii, 16–21. 3. Our Lord most wisely desired to be the selecter of his own preachers and proclaimers. He justly esteemed it not according to a divine order, that devils should be the free testifiers to his divinity. Nor was every man who was the object of his mercy well qualified by dignity, prudence, understanding, or accuracy, to give a correct impress of his divine power and mission. His own apostles even, after long training and more than one trial, did he find scarce fit to utter his truth or proclaim his deeds and character. His only proper expositor, except in peculiar cases, was himself. 4. Why he bade the demoniac of Gadara publish his deliverance abroad is explained in our comment on the place. (See on Mark v, 19.) Our Lord was about leaving that country, and so was not liable to the inconveniences mentioned above; he was leaving many traducers, and so needed one outspoken defender and preacher.

But...show thyself to the priest—Some commentators suppose that the Saviour silenced him *until* he had seen the priest, in order that the priest might pronounce him clean, uninfluenced by any rumour of his miracles. But our Lord utters no *until*. He gives the man no permission to proclaim it after he has seen the priest. *A testimony unto them*—That they may know that a mighty cleanser is here. It was a most suitable case to present to the priesthood, because it came by law under their notice, (Lev. xiv, 2, 10, 21,) because of its peculiar symbolical significance, and because of its demonstrative character. It was a problem which they would be at a loss how to solve, but by admitting his divine mission.

§ 37.—Second Miracle—Healing the Centurion's Servant, 5–13.

5. *Entered into Capernaum*—From the Sermon on the Mount. *Centurion*—A Roman captain over a hundred men, As Lake Gennesaret was a water of no little traffic between northern Syria and Palestine, so Capernaum was a port of revenue, and the abode of a Roman garrison to keep the turbulent Gallean peasantry in order. The centurion on the present occasion was evidently one whose residence in Palestine had detached him from the paganism of his Roman education. He had traced in Judaism evidences of truth which touched his heart. He almost seems a prototype of Cornelius in the Acts.

9. *I...under authority...Go, and he goeth*—The centurion here utters to the Lord a beautiful parable. As I am a

10 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven:

12 But [k]the children of the kingdom [l]shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou has believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

14 ¶ [m]And when Jesus was

i Gen. 12. 3; Isa. 2. 2, 3; 11. 10; Mal. 1. 11; Luke 13. 29; Acts 10. 45; 11. 18; 14. 27; Romans 15. 9-12; Eph. 3. 6.

k Chap. 21. 43.—*l* Chap. 13. 42, 50; 22. 13; 24. 51; 25. 30; Luke 13. 28; 2 Pet. 2. 17; Jude 13.
m Mark 1. 29, 30, 31; Luke 4. 38, 39.

captain on earth, thou art captain of the armies of heaven. As I send men and they obey, so canst thou send death or life, disease or restoration, and they shall obey thy order.

As the preceding miracle was performed with a touch, so this was done through distance of space.

10. *No, not in Israel*—The entire chosen people of God is now thus signally surpassed in faith in its own Messiah by this poor incoming Gentile! How striking a commentary upon the apostle's words, Rom. ix, 31–32: "Israel hath not attained to righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith."

11. *Many... from the east and west*—Our Lord here predicts the call of the Gentiles to occupy a place in the Gospel dispensation. *With Abraham*—They should become his spiritual descendants, and occupy the place of his natural offspring. *Sit down*—Rather *recline*. The image is taken from a banquet, and the ancients did not sit at table on chairs, but reclined upon couches. *Kingdom of heaven*—Both above and below.

12. *Children of the kingdom*—Natural Jews. The kingdom of heaven, that is, the Gospel dispensation, including the kingdom of glory as well as of grace, is represented as a divine banquet, in which, while the Jews, the natural *children of the kingdom*, are excluded, the repentant Gentiles take their couches with Abraham and the other ancestral patriarchs. The heirship by faith is substituted for the heirship by birth, and the spiritual guests are the true children of Abraham.

Outer darkness—The figure of a banquet is carried out. The splendour, the joy, the society, the feast within, are an emblem of God's kingdom below and above. The darkness of the streets without is an emblem of deep horror. The streets of Eastern cities are narrow and filthy; all the outdoor comfort being reserved for the court or square yard enclosed within the area of the building. At night they are totally dark, being unillumined even by rays from a window. Robbers and ferocious dogs render them dangerous. We have thence a strong image of that utter despair, darkness, and death of a soul excluded from God, and left to *weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

§ 28.—Third Miracle—Healing Peter's Wife's Mother, 14, 15.

The peculiarity of this miracle seems to be that it was performed upon a person who would remain a present and permanent witness of the fact. It would, no doubt, contribute its share to produce that firm and earnest faith in the heart of Peter, the most eminent of the apostles, which he displayed so conspicuously in life and in death.

14. *And when Jesus was come into Peter's house*—This *third* miracle in Matthew's group was performed on our Lord's previous visit to Capernaum, (Mark i, 29–31,) before the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount. It took

come into Peter's house, he saw [n] his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 ¶ [o] When the even was come they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, [p] Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

18 ¶ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

n 1 Cor. 9. 5.—*o* Mark 1. 32, &c.; Luke 4. 40, 41.

p Isaiah 53. 4; 1 Peter 2. 24.

place, as we learn by Mark, immediately after his curing a demoniac in the synagogue, on the Sabbath. Of Tabiga, the grand manufacturing suburb of Capernaum, Dr. Thomson says: "As there is considerable marshy land about this Tabiga, may not this account for the prevalence of fevers at Capernaum? for here it was, of course, that Peter's wife's mother lay sick of a fever. "Fevers of a very malignant type are still prevalent, particularly in summer and autumn, owing, no doubt, to the extreme heat acting upon these marshy plains, such as the Bŭtaiha, at the influx of the Jordan."

Peter's house—And his brother Andrew's also, as Mark says. Peter is mentioned alone by Matthew from his stronger personal character.

Wife's mother—So the Papists have to confess that the first pope was a married man. And 1 Cor. ix, 5, plainly shows that he led about his wife in his apostolic missions. So little authorized by Scripture is the Romish enforcement of clerical celibacy. *Laid sick*—Evidently no slight indisposition.

15. *He touched her hand*—Mark says that he also raised her and grasped her hand. Luke says that he rebuked the disorder, so that perhaps he also spoke. In these different points the evangelist who adds something more, does not contradict him who says the less.

Ministered unto them—A token both of her real and sudden cure of what Luke calls "a great fever," and of her gratitude for its performance.

16. *Even*—Old English for *evening*. Some say they waited for evening to avoid the heat of the day. But as it was Sabbath, and we read of no other instance of withholding the sick until evening, doubtless they waited until the Jewish Sabbatical hours were over.

17. *That it might be fulfilled*—It can, in a true sense, be said that the prophetic Scriptures *must* be fulfilled. And in a subordinate sense, it can be truly said that things were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled; and this without either saying that such was the intention of the doers, or that they could not do otherwise. They freely acted to fulfil prophecy, because prophecy foretold what they would freely do. *Esaias*—Isa. liii, 4. *Took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*—Sickness, mortality, temporal death, are as truly a part of the great penalty of sin, as the very pains of hell itself. All these were borne by the Saviour in the form of atoning sufferings on the cross. It was by this substitutional suffering in our stead, that the man Christ Jesus was entitled to redeem us from hell and relieve us from even the earthly part of our woes. He healed sicknesses, therefore, by bearing even *them* in his own body on the tree.

§ 50.—Fourth Miracle—Stilling the Tempest, 18–27.

18. *Now when Jesus saw*—Matthew now selects a miracle which took place much later in his ministry than the last, (see Hist. Synop.,) and of which the peculiarity is that it manifests our Lord's command over the elements. He here

19 [q] And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and [r] the birds of the air *have* nests; but the [s] Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

21 [t] And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, [u] suffer me first to go and bury my father.

q Luke 9. 57, 58.—*r* Psa. 84. 3; 104. 17.
s Isa. 53. 2; 1 Cor. 8. 9.

t Luke 9. 59, 60.—*u* See 1 Kings 19. 20.

rules as Lord of external nature. *The other side*—Of Lake Gennesaret. He crossed from west to east.

19–22. Matthew here relates two incidents illustrating our Lord's selection of disciples. Two contrasted cases are presented. In the first, a disciple of no ordinary qualifications offers himself, and is not accepted. In the other a chosen disciple presents a very strong plea for being excused, but is imperatively retained.

Luke adds a third instance of a man who was almost ready to follow our Lord, but had a small cause for postponement; our Lord rejects him.

The incident which Matthew here relates of *the scribe*, is placed by Luke in a very different part of the Lord's history. Yet in Luke it stands isolated like a separate anecdote, whereas here in Matthew it has the air of being a proposition made by the scribe to our Lord as he was about to cross the lake.

19. *A certain scribe*—As a professional man, read in law, and probably of the tribe of Levi, he would appear to be a more eligible disciple than the fisherman or the toll-gatherer. *Whithersoever*—He seems prepared for trials. There is no proof of any ambitious motive. Yet our Lord sees that he has not the material for a true apostle. He neither accepts nor rejects him; he only gives a vivid picture of his own poor accommodations, and the scribe's ardour seems to evaporate. It is very probable that the scribe acted more wisely in staying than in going. He would have spoiled perhaps a good scribe, and have made a poor apostle. Not every profound Christian scholar is bound to be a preacher of the Gospel. He does not seem to have even persisted to cross the Gennesaret. There are those who have an idea that there is something in the life of a missionary attractive and romantic. When such are the motives, a most miserable failure results.

20. *Son of man*—This title designates our Lord as *truly man*, in distinction from his being also Son of God. This humbler title is used seventy-one times in the New Testament, and in every case, with a single exception, by our Lord himself. The martyr Stephen, (Acts vii, 56,) beholding his glorified humanity at the right hand of God, uses this epithet. *Foxes have holes*—Wild animals have their regular habitations and their homes, but the divine One is homeless on earth.

21. *Another of his disciples*—It may be more intelligibly rendered: "*Another, being one of his disciples.*" Tradition says it was Philip. It is clear he was one of the twelve, for our Lord does not excuse him at his request. Nothing but the apparent solemn duty which formed the reason for the request justified the making it, for in the instance added by Luke a slight reason offered was ground of reproof and rejection.

Bury my father—Who is aged, and needs my care until he goes down to the grave. Alas! before he dies and the burial is accomplished, the Son of man will have finished his ministry, and thou wilt have lost thy apostleship.

But most commentators understand that the father lies already a corpse, and the disciple asks a dispensation from duty to go and bury him. With this interpretation there is a deep rigour in our Lord's words. He must then be understood to declare that a higher duty is pressing upon him than even the burying his dead father. The Gospel is more than the paternal corpse. Other relatives may perform that task, on whom rests no higher duty. And per-

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and [x]let the dead bury their dead.

23 ¶ And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 [y]And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then [z]he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea: and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is

x Eph. 2. 15; 1 Tim. 5. 6.—y Mark 4. 37, &c.; Luke 8. 23, &c.—z Psa. 65. 7; 89. 9; 107. 20.

haps our Lord recognized that if this disciple went, there was danger that he would soon be numbered with the morally dead who were burying the corporeally dead. Our Lord may have perceived a worldliness in his heart and in his request that would have involved him in danger. The tenderest ties are often the conductors of temptation. The man who is willing to delay his obedience to God's call, may find in his delay the snare that will involve him in ruin.

22. *Follow me*—Infinite interests must take precedence of the finite. *Dead bury their dead*—The maxim is pointed with a play upon the double sense of the word *dead*. Let the spiritually dead bury the corporeally dead. Let a secular world perform its duties to its secular members. Our duties must be applied to a life eternal. Luke adds, (chap. viii, 60,) "But go thou and preach the kingdom of God."

Did the three instances of settling the matter of following our Lord occur on the same day? Perhaps so. They may have transpired in view of our Lord's passing over the lake into the wild Gadarene country.

Or, the first one having occurred at that time, the Evangelists may introduce the other instances by association of similarity, as alike illustrating the mode of our Lord's choice of apostles. It was not because our Lord could not have selected men of rank and influence for the sacred office, but for deeper reasons, that he called the humble laborious laymen.

23. *Ship*—A small, open fishing boat.

24. *There arose a great tempest*—It was not so much a storm as a gust or hurricane—a wind-storm; "one of those incidents," says Stanley, "to which every mountain lake, more or less, and the Sea of Galilee, from its situation, especially, is subject. Through one of the deep ravines, breaking through the hills to the shore, there came down a storm of wind on the lake. In a moment the still waters were aroused as by an earthquake, and the waves filled the boat. Almost every feature of the story which follows can be traced to the locality."

25. *We perish*—We are now perishing, while thou art sleeping. Like Jonah, he slept; but, unlike Jonah, he was the arrester, not the cause, of the storm.

26. *Of little faith*—Our Lord's exquisite language does not charge that they had *no* faith, but *little*. They had, indeed, as Mark reports his words, "no faith," that is, to hush the elements or their own panic; but they had faith that their Master could. *Rebuked the winds*—As a master *rebukes* a raging animal. *Great calm*—The calm was great from the completeness of the stillness; and great from the contrast with the previous storm; and great as a product of a wonderful power. And with it the terrors of their hearts, the winds and waves within the soul, were composed. So when the fearful sinner resorts to Christ, his word of forgiveness allays the storm, and there is a great calm.

27. *The men marvelled*—Not the *workmen* of the boat, for the disciples were probably their own workmen. They are

this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

28 ¶ [a] And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29 And behold, they cried out, saying, [b] What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30 And there was a good way off from them a herd of many swine feeding.

31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, [c] they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.

CHAPTER IX.

AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, [a] and came into his own city.

a Mark 5. 1, &c.; Luke 8. 26, &c.—*b* Acts 16. 17; James 2. 19.

c Deut. 5. 25; 1 Kings 17. 18; Luke 5. 8; Acts 16. 39.
a Chap. 4. 13.

called the *men*, as a humbling term, in comparison with him, the *divine* one. *What manner of man*—They expected, indeed, that he would save them; but they were overwhelmed with the majesty and ease with which he issued his orders to the elements, and at the submission with which they, like living intelligences, are hushed by his word.

§ 42 —Fifth Miracle—Dispossessing two Demoniacs, 28–34.

Matthew pursues our Lord's course across the lake, in order to narrate a miracle which displays our Lord's authority over the powers of hell, as this shows his command over the elements of the earth.

This miracle is more fully narrated by Mark, to whose account, and our notes thereon, the reader is referred.

It may be proper here to note, however, that between the two accounts there is a difference in regard to the number of demoniacs dispossessed. Matthew mentions two; Mark and Luke note but one. Here is variation, but not contradiction. He who says there is two of course includes the one. He who mentions the one does not deny the other. The two evangelists doubtless specify the one which was the more bold and prominent. There was a *second* less marked, whom they pass over, but Matthew mentions.

CHAPTER IX.

In this chapter the group of ten specimen miracles given by Matthew is completed. They are selected from different periods of our Lord's ministry, and their place in order of time will be found by referring to the Historical Synopsis. The miracles of the present chapter are *five*, namely: 1. The paralytic; 2. The infirm woman; 3. The ruler's daughter; 4. The two blind; 5. The dumb demoniac.

1. *To his own city—His own* by residence, Capernaum. See note on iv, 13.

This verse properly closes the narrative of our Lord's excursion across Gen

2 [b]And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: [c]and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

3 And behold, certain of the

[b] Mark 2. 3; Luke 5. 18.

[c] Chapter 8. 10.

nesaret and his return. What follows occurred at Capernaum some time previous, and before his Sermon on the Mount.

§ 30.—Sixth Miracle—The Palsy cured, 2–8.

The main points in this miracle are these: 1. Such is the true faith of the man himself, beheld by our Lord's discerning spirit, that he pardons his sins before he heals his palsy. It is first soul, and then body. So when the wreck made by sin in our entire nature is repaired, man will become physically perfect. 2. Our Lord is a perfect logician. He places here the miracle as *proof*, in close succession after his claim of forgiving power as the *thing to be proved*. No geometrician could ever bring proposition and demonstration into closer contact. "Thy sins be forgiven thee," is, first, the proposition, and then the miracle is the proof. His miracles demonstrate that he is connected and clothed with the divine power by which he forgives the penitent. Miracles are therefore intended to be a demonstration of divine authority. 3. Our Lord reads the conscious thoughts of men. He gave the blaspheming scribes a proof to their inward consciousness that he knew their hearts. See note on v, 4.

2. *Behold, they brought...palsy*—It appears by the parallel passage in Luke, that there were present a number of Pharisees and doctors from north and south, even from as far as Jerusalem. Our Lord either addressed the crowd from the court gallery, or in the large reception room. *They brought...lying on a bed*—Mark says he was brought by four men. *Palsy* seems to be a contraction of the word paralysis. It implies the loss of the power of muscular motion. *Seeing their faith*—But what special display of faith, calling even for the forgiveness of the man's sins, does there here appear? We should not know from Matthew's brief account but Mark and Luke, without any such design, explain the matter. They furnish the absent fact, and thus unintentionally show how a true event is the basis of all the common narrative. Such was the crowd in the room where our Lord was, that they could not bring their couch before him. They therefore ascended a flight of stairs which ran up the house from the court, or perhaps stairs belonging to some adjoining house, and mounted the roof. They tore up the matting, of which the slight roof was composed, and let the palsied man down into the room or gallery where our Lord and the assembly were. From this two things are evident: First, the man himself was probably a personage of no ordinary consequence, to presume on such a procedure; and, second, his faith must have been strong to induce him to force his bearers through such a process. For a description of an Oriental house and explanation of the circumstances of the narrative, see supplementary note at end of the chapter. *Son, be of good cheer*—Disease had rendered him desperate; perhaps the consciousness of having, by evil courses, brought on his condition, induced penitence; so that in the presence of our Lord his heart had sunk. Sweet, then, were the words of the blessed Jesus, calling him *son*, encouraging his heart, and forgiving his sin. *Thy sins be forgiven thee*—Our Lord here has a double purpose. In the man he sees repentance and faith, and his first purpose is to show him mercy. In the scribes' hearts he knows there is impenitence and cavil, and he means to refute, and even, if it were possible, furnish argument to convince them.

3. *Blasphemeth*—By its proper force this word means to slander or reproach. Here it means to infringe the divine

scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus [d]knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier, to say, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, [e]Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,)

[d] Psa. 139. 2; chap. 12. 25; Mark 12. 15; Luke 5. 22; 6. 8; 9. 47; 11. 17.

attributes or impeach the divine character in a presumptuous way.

4. *Knowing their thoughts*—To know the hearts of men was, with the Jews, a test of the true Messiah's claims. When Bar Cocav declared himself Messiah, the rabbins quoted Isaiah xi, 3, and examined him to see if he could reveal the secrets of their hearts. He failed, and they slew him.

5. *Whether is it easier to say*—That is, to say it with a clear and visible effect to sustain it. Any popish priest can SAY, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*, and the credulous may believe that a miracle of pardon is performed. But it is not quite so easy to perform the bodily miracle. The papist may claim that he performs a miracle in transforming the sacramental elements into real flesh and blood, and his followers may believe him. But it always takes a sensible and material miracle, attested beyond rational doubt, to make the moral miracle credible. When a man does heal the sick, and raise the dead at will, we may then begin to believe that he has authority to forgive the sins by which disease and death are produced.

6. *Power on earth*—The counterpart of *power in heaven*. It could be no superior scientific skill, it could be no mere earthly magnetic power, it could be no accidental coincidence of events.

Take up thy bed—A light mattress. Other men brought him on the bed; he can now carry himself away, bed and all.

7. *And he arose*—Christ said, *Arise*, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitudes saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

9 ¶ [f]And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith

[e] Acts 3. 6; 4. 9, 10; 9. 34; 14. 8, 10.—[f] Mark 2. 14; Luke 5. 27.

and he *arose*. It is the public, instantaneous succession of divine *cause* and *effect*. *To his house*—Doubtless now the cheerful home of a happy occupant, whose body and soul were both made whole.

8. *Multitudes saw it*—No motives of self-interest interfered to prevent their yielding to the force of demonstration. They *glorified God*. Had the hearts of the Pharisees and scribes, many of whom were present, been in a reasonable mood, they would have done the same.

§ 31.—CALL OF MATTHEW.

9. *Matthew*—The call of Matthew, as a consultation of the Synopsis will show, occurred early in the history of our Lord, before the Sermon on the Mount. It is inserted in this group of miracles, we might almost suppose, because Matthew himself considered it a miracle of love and mercy to call and inspire him with so ready a faith and so prompt an obedience. *Sitting at the receipt of custom*—In the office of the receiver of the duties on the trades of Lake Gennesaret. *Sitting*—Dr. Thomson remarks: "The people of this country *sit* at all kinds of work. The carpenter saws, planes, and hews with his hand-adze, sitting on the ground or upon the plank he is planing. The washerwoman *sits* by the tub; and, in a word, no one stands where it is possible to sit. Shopkeepers always sit; and Levi *sitting* at the receipt of custom is the exact way to state the case."

unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

10 ¶ [g] And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your master with [h] publicans and [i] sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, [j] I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the right-

g Mark 2. 15, &c.; Luke 5. 29, &c.——*h* Chap. 11. 19; Luke 5. 30; 15. 2.

i Gal. 2. 15.——*j* Hosea 6. 6; Micah 6. 6, 7, 8; chap. 12. 7.

Mr. Morier, at Persepolis, observes: "Here is a station of rahdars, or toll-gatherers, appointed to levy a toll upon kafilers, or caravans of merchants; and who, in general, exercise their office with so much brutality and extortion that they are execrated by all travellers. The collections of the tolls are farmed, consequently extortion ensues; and as most of the rahdars receive no other emolument than what they can exact over and above the prescribed dues from the traveller, their insolence is accounted for, and a cause sufficiently powerful is given for their insolence on the one hand, and the detestation in which they are held on the other." How unpopular the publicans were in the days of Matthew, is shown by the customary phrase, "publicans and sinners."

He arose, and followed—The promptness of Matthew is not emphasized or expatiated upon, but it appears in the striking rapidity of the narrative. The call of Matthew is the fourth instance of the matter of our Lord's engaging a disciple which we have had to note in our comment. (See notes on viii, 19–22.) It differs in character from either of the other three.

§ 52.—Conversation at Matthew's Feast, 10–17.

This fact occurred probably some six months after the call mentioned in the last verse.

10. *At meat in the house*—Luke informs us that it was in Matthew's or Levi's house. *Publicans and sinners*—Men of unpopular reputation, and men guilty of wicked conduct. Matthew called to this feast not only his old associates the publicans, but many whom he would gladly bring under the reforming power of our Lord's discourse. He thus showed to his acquaintances and friends that he gloried in his Christian profession and Christian hopes.

11. *Pharisees*—Their very name signifies *separatists*, indicating that they stood apart from the unholy masses. *Said... Why*—It was thought unsuitable for a rabbi to eat with the commonalty.

12. *Whole need not a physician*—Here is the fundamental principle of benevolence on which he proceeded. He asked not, Where shall I find the wealthy, the honourable, or the learned? Such had their comforts, and would despise his offers. He visited not Herod or Cæsar. He condescended to those whom all acknowledged to be miserable and lost. He thus visibly declared that the Saviour of man is emphatically a Saviour of the lost.

13. *What that meaneth*—Hosea vi, 6. *I*—Jehovah. *Will have*—Will require from men. *Mercy*—The benevolent disposition of soul toward our fellowmen. *Not sacrifice*—Instead of the right disposition of heart. It is a poor piety that attempts to be a substitute for virtue. Jehovah requires of us *mercy* like Christ's, rather than *sacrifice* like the Pharisee's. *Righteous*—As you esteem yourselves. *Sinners*—As you esteem these poor publicans and others at Matthew's table. If they were in-

eous, [k]but sinners to repentance.

14 ¶ Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, [l]Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can [m]the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and [n]then shall they fast.

16 No man putteth a piece of [1]new cloth unto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

[k] 1 Tim. 1. 15.—[l] Mark 2. 18-22; Luke 5. 33-39; 18. 12.—[m] John 3. 29.

[n] Acts 13. 2, 3; 14. 23; 1 Cor. 7. 5.—[1] Or, *raw* or, *unwrought cloth.*

deed *righteous*, independently of Christ, Christ was no Saviour for them. But he went to the outcast to show that it is only as *outcasts* any of us can claim any share in his mission.

14. *Disciples of John*—Their master was in prison, and their sorrowing hearts, influenced by the ascetic views of their master as well as by his calamitous circumstances, can hardly understand how Jesus is *feasting* with the publicans. They as little understand his benevolence as do the Pharisees; but their false view is from a different standpoint. The sternest Old Testament spirit was in John and his mission. Our Lord here shows them the gladder temper of the Gospel.

15. *Children of the bride-chamber*—These were the attendant young comrades of the bridegroom, who assisted in the festivities of the wedding. *Bridegroom*—When the bridegroom should come to the house of the bride's father the wedding would proceed, and the hilarity would begin. See notes on chapter xxv, 1–13. Christ is the glorious bridegroom who has come. He who was just now the physician for the sick, and so the source of health, is now the bridegroom for the anxious waiters, and so the source of joy. His disciples are the bridegroom's friends. Theirs is not the part of the Old Testament tarriers for his coming; they belong to a gladder dispensation; they proclaim a Saviour come. *Bridegroom shall be taken*—The Saviour shall disappear. *Then shall they fast*—Sorrow then shall be for his absence and for our distance from him, which shall sober the joy even of this dispensation; but never a stern sadness which forgets that the Saviour has come, and that in spirit he is here evermore. The sentiment, then, stripped of its symbols, is this: My disciples refuse to fast, in order to show that they belong to the new and joyous dispensation; yet after my departure Christians shall ever feel the sorrow of a distance from me temper the joy of my having come.

Mr. Roberts remarks, in his illustrations, that when a man is gloomy and stern in the midst of surrounding joy, or upon some occasion demanding hilarity, his neighbour in the East would be apt to say: "What, do people weep in the house of marriage? Is it a funeral or a marriage you are going to celebrate?" Does a person go to cheer his friend, he says, on entering the house, "I am come this day to the house of marriage."

16. *Piece of new cloth*—Symbol of the spirit and mode of the new dispensation. *Old garment*—The Old Testament institutions and John's dispensation. *Rent is made worse*—The new patch, undressed by the fuller, and moist, will shrink and rend the old worn garment's cloth. The sentiment is clear, by translation of the symbols. There is a contrariety between the old, stern dispensation of Moses and Elias, (the latter antityped in John.) and the new dispensation of peace and salvation. Our serene joy, fastened upon your gloomy dispensation, would be like a new patch on an old garment, unsightly and marring. The same

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 ¶ [o] While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and *so did* his disciples.

20 ¶ [p] And behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself,

o Mark 5. 22, &c.; Luke 8. 41, &c.

p Mark 5. 25; Luke 8. 43.

point is illustrated by additional symbols in the following verses.

17. *New wine*—Which has yet to ferment. *Old bottles*—These bottles or flasks were made of leather skins. When old and rigid, they were liable to burst from the fermentation of the newly made wine. As here again the new

wine is the symbol of the *new dispensation* of joy, and the *old bottles* are the symbol of the *old dispensation* of shadows; so the truth is again illustrated that new Christianity, with its living spirit, cannot afford to remain enveloped in the old skin of ascetic Judaism. And this is the answer to the disciples of John, who wonder at the new fashion of Christ's disciples, who do not disfigure their faces, according to the old custom, with much fasting.

Luke (v, 39) adds a sort of apology by our Lord for the prejudices expressed in the query of John's disciples. "No man also having drunk the old wine *straightway* desireth the new; for he saith, The old is better." So it takes a while for the disciple of the old dispensation to accommodate his feelings to the new order of things. His attachments to the institutions so mellowed, like wine, by time, induce him to prefer them from their very antiquity. He saith *the old* is better. There is, indeed, an excellence about the *old*, there is something exciting and fermenting about the *new;* but the *old* must be worn out and disappear. The *new* is truly an advance in excellence, and it is a mere customary taste that induces the man to repeat the constant saw, "The old is better."

§ 52.—Seventh Miracle—Raising the Ruler's Daughter, 18–26.

This miracle is narrated with greater detail by Mark, upon whose account see our comments. Mark v, 22–43.

18. *A certain ruler*—A ruler of the synagogue at Capernaum. His name was Jairus. *Worshipped*—The Greek word implies reverence, but not necessarily divine worship. See note on viii, 2. *Even now dead*—The exaggeration of his parental feelings. She had not at that moment probably died. *She shall live*—The ruler's faith was firm.

§ 52.—Eighth Miracle—Healing the Issue, 20–22.

20. *Behold, a woman*—The evangelist's narrative makes this, as it were, a miracle within a miracle. See notes on Mark v, 25–34.

If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; [q] thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

23 [r] And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw [s] the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, [t] Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

26 And [2] the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

27 ¶ And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, [u] *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on us.

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, [v] Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, [x] See *that* no man know *it*.

q Luke 7. 50; 8. 48; 17. 19; 18. 42.—*r* Mark 5. 38; Luke 8. 51.—*s* See 2 Chr. 35. 25.—*t* Acts 20. 10.—2 Or, *this fame*.

u Chap. 15. 22; 20. 30, 31; Mark 10. 47; Luke 18. 38.—*v* Mark 9. 23, 24; John 4. 48, 50; 11. 26, 40. *x* Chap. 8. 4; 12. 16; 17. 9; Luke 5. 14.

§ 53.—Ninth Miracle—Curing two Blind, 27–31.

27. *Departed thence*—Returned from the ruler's house to his own sojourn. *Two blind men*—The curing of the blind was a frequent miracle of our Lord, as narrated by the evangelists. From the sandiness of the soil irritating the eyes with flying particles, as well as from sleeping in the open air and exposing the eyes to the noxious night dews, the disease of blindness is much more prevalent in the East than among us. And as all our Lord's miracles of mercy to the body were emblems of mercy to the soul, this frequent miracle beautifully illustrates the Gospel power of relieving the spiritual blindness of sinners. *Thou Son of David*—They hereby acknowledged the royal lineage and consequent Messiahship of our Lord. The carpenter's son was truly by birth a prince; his pedigree, as given by the evangelists, though doubtless seldom referred to or named by his lowly parents, was still on record.

28. *Into the house*—Where he dwelt at Capernaum. The blind men found him on the way, and followed him in, with supplication. *Believe ye...I am able*—They had shown faith both by calling him Son of David and following him into the house. But the Lord proceeds still farther to draw out their faith. Confession confirms faith. They must confess, and they will doubly profit by the miracle.

29. *Touched their eyes*—As if his finger were the conductor of the power. But the act served to show that the cure was no accidental coincidence. It visibly manifested that the work was his. *According to your faith*—So that the measure of faith which you have shall be exactly justified, sustained, and rewarded. Thus faith is a readiness to receive of God. Though it has no merit to deserve a reward yet it is the right state of soul to receive God's truth and mercy.

30. *That no man know it*—Not every man is fit to preach the Gospel who has received God's mercy. Not every

31 [y]But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 ¶ [z]As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, [a]He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

35 [b]And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, [c]teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

y Mark 7. 36. — *z* Chap. 12. 22; Luke 11. 14. *a* Chap. 12. 24; Mark 3. 22; Luke 11. 15.

b Mark 6. 6; Luke 13. 22. — *c* Chapter 4. 23.

time is proper for proclaiming the truth. Compare on chap. viii, 4.

31. *Spread abroad his fame*—Affectionately disobedient! It was not like the disobedience of a hater of Christ, but still it was a disobedience and a wrong. Young converts often err even in their Christian zeal.

§ 54.—Tenth Miracle—Curing a dumb Demoniac, 32–34.

32. *Dumb man possessed with a devil*—His dumbness was not (like that in Mark vii, 31–37) a natural defect, but produced upon him by an evil power. It only required the expulsion of the evil one to relieve the disqualification. Our natural evils spring from sin, and therefore Satan joins with them, when he can, against us. Sin, Satan, and disease are allied enemies of man.

34. *But the Pharisees said*—What could they say? Not that he never performed any miracles. Not that his miracles were ever contrary to mercy, benevolence, peace, and every divine virtue. And yet they ascribed the whole system of miraculous works to Satan. As if they did not know that all devilish manifestations are ever malignant, base, and sensual.

With this closes the group of nine miracles of the last two chapters. (*Introduction* to chap. viii.) They should be studied to see what a variety of kinds they embrace, and with what a variety of incidents they are attended. They are selected, too, from an immense number. They imply power over disease, life, elements, brutes, devils, and the secrets of men's hearts. They exhibit touches of tenderness, faith, gratitude, and wonder. But in the background is a party of deep, malignant, calumniating enemies, who hate him because he is pure and good, and will disbelieve because they hate. Hatred will give spring to action, and they will land in crimes which the soul shudders to mention.

§ 56.—Preparation for sending forth the Twelve, 35–38.

Matthew having, in chapters fifth, sixth, and seventh, given the platform of the new dispensation, and in chapters eighth and ninth, specimens of our Lord's miracles, proceeds now to narrate the occasion and mode of sending forth his disciples upon their ministrations. The present paragraph gives a summary of our Lord's travels and ministry previous to his solemn declaration that the labourers were too few for harvest. The evangelist proceeds, then, in the next chapter, to relate how our Lord sent the "labourers" forth.

35. *Went about all the cities and villages*—Before sending forth his preachers, over how wide a circuit, and with what an active ministry, did our Lord himself precede them. He was the original *itinerant*, and they but his commissioned imitators. *Cities and villages*—Wherever he found a sufficiently dense population. *Synagogues*—The Jewish synagogues were the first scene of the preached Gospel; and so acceptable was our Lord's preaching, that the Jewish

36 ¶ [d]But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they [3]fainted, and were scattered abroad, [e]as sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, [f]The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few;

38 [g]Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

d Mark 6. 34.—3 Or, *were tired and lay down.*—*e* Numbers 27. 17; 1 Kings 22. 17; Ezek. 34. 5; Zechariah 10. 2.—*f* Luke 10. 2; John 4. 35.—*g* 2 Thess. 3. 1.

people of Galilee did not exclude him. See note on chap. iv, 23.

Preaching the gospel...healing...sickness—His mercy to the body secured reception for his medicine for the soul.

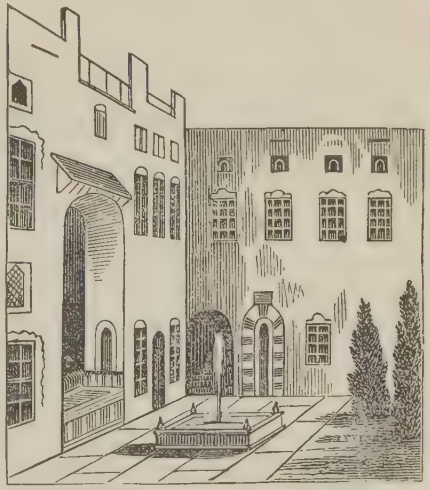
36. *When he saw the multitudes*—That is, whenever, during his circuit, he saw the vast congregations attracted by the fame of his works and listening with ready ear to his words. *He was moved with compassion*—A tender pity would arise in his heart, day after day, at the sight of the successive crowds. *Because they fainted*—The epithet fainted is applied to them in their character of sheep, who are *worried* and *exhausted* in the way. *Having no shepherd*—Even Moses is no shepherd to them, for the Galileans were half Gentile in their views. Their professed religious teachers were rather *wolves* than *shepherds*, who fed upon rather than fed the flock. The words of truth and mercy from the lips of Jesus were new to their ears and hearts. Doubtless the evangelist, in this verse, expresses the feeling of the Saviour in the very words which fell from his own lips.

37. *Then saith he*—Probably on more occasions than one in his circuit. *The harvest truly is plenteous*—He views the vast multitudes scattered over the plains as a vast field of grain, which had now ripened for the Gospel sickle. So in John iv, 35, he exclaims in a similar figure to his disciples, Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. *The labourers are few*—The Gospel reapers for this vast white field—where are they? None as yet but myself.

38. *Pray ye therefore*—For though it be the act of God, it depends upon the prayer of man. Divine operation waits upon human co-operation. God will do, in answer to prayer, what will not be done without prayer. Low faith in the Church produces slow development of the work of salvation. No doubt our Lord primarily has in view the Jewish multitudes before him. Yet in more distant prospect is to be included the wide *field* of the *world* and its vast *harvest* in the coming age.

And now, in the next chapter, we find Jesus *sending forth* his Twelve.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE TO VERSE 2.



The Oriental houses, very unlike our own, were low frames with flat roofs, so constructed as to enclose a square yard or *court* under the open sky in the centre.

CHAPTER X.

AND [a] when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power [1]*against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve

a Mark 3. 13, 14; 6. 7; Luke 6. 13; 9. 1.—1 Or, over.

They are built for privacy, and so present to the street (which is very narrow) almost a blank wall; and the doors and windows open and front inwardly toward the court.

From the street you enter such a house by a small door into a passage way leading directly to the court. The court is generally paved, with perhaps a fountain or well in its centre. As you enter the court from the passage way you see opposite you, across the court, the ordinary *reception room* for visitors. Or, ascending a flight of steps, as you have entered the court, you mount to the floor of the upper story. This upper story is lined with a gallery or piazza, projecting from all the four walls toward the court, with its edges made safe for walkers by a railing or balustrade.

It has been made a matter of much skeptical query how this paralytic could be thus let down through the roof to Jesus. Mr. Kitto supposes that our Saviour stood in the crowded gallery and addressed the multitude who densely filled the court below. The bearers of the paralytic, ascending the stairs near the entry of the court, and finding the gallery crowded, mounted the stairs leading to the roof. As the gallery had a slight covering, the man was easily let down by its removal.

Dr. Thomson says: "The houses of Capernaum, as is evident from the ruins, were like those of modern villages in this same region, low, *very low*, with flat roofs, reached by a stairway from the yard or court. Jesus probably stood in the open *lewan*, [or reception room,] and the crowd were around and in front of him. Those who carried the paralytic, not being able 'to come at him for the press,' ascended to the roof, removed so much of it as was necessary, and let their patient down through the aperture.

"The roof is only a few feet high, and by stooping down and holding the corners of the couch, merely a thickly padded quilt, as at present in this region, they could let down the sick man without any apparatus of ropes or cords to assist them. I have often seen it done, and done it myself, to houses in Lebanon, but there is always more dust than is agreeable. The materials now employed for roofs are beams about three feet apart, across which short sticks are arranged close together and covered with thickly matted thorn-brush, called *bellan*. Over this is spread a coat of stiff mortar, and then comes the marl or earth, which makes the roof. Now it is easy to remove any part of this without injuring the rest. No objection therefore would be made on this account by the owners of the house. They had merely to scrape back the earth from a portion of the roof over the *lewan*, take up the thorns and short sticks, and let down the couch between the beams at the very feet of Jesus. The end achieved, they could easily restore the roof as it was before."

CHAPTER X.

§ 57.—THE TWELVE INSTRUCTED, AND SENT ON A TRIAL MISSION, 1–42.

Twelve—Why was the number twelve selected? Doubtless in allusion to the twelve tribes of Israel. In Matt. xix, 28, Jesus says to his twelve disciples: "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." By this sacred number our Lord intimated to the Jewish nation that he, the heir of David, and God's Messiah or Anointed One, was king of Israel, and these his tribal judges or viceroys.

2. *Apostles*—The word apostle signifies *one sent*. It is derived from the Greek word ἀποστέλλω, *apostello*, which is the very word used in verse 5, and translated *sent forth*.

apostles are these; The first, Simon, [b] who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew;

[b] John 1. 42.

§ 35.—Catalogue of the Twelve, 2–4.

By a careful comparison of the four different Apostolic catalogues given by the narrators, we shall find them divisible, as below, by parallel lines, into three classes; each class being headed by the same name, and each class including the same names, but with the lower names in each class variously ranged:

	Matthew x, 2–4.	*Mark* iii, 16-19.	*Luke* vi, 14-16.	*Acts* i, 13.
1	Simon Peter.	Simon Peter.	Simon Peter.	Peter.
2	Andrew, his brother.	James.	Andrew.	James.
3	James, son of Zebedee.	John.	James.	John.
4	John, his brother.	Andrew.	John.	Andrew.
5	Philip.	Philip.	Philip.	Philip.
6	Bartholomew.	Bartholomew.	Bartholomew.	Thomas.
7	Thomas.	Matthew.	Matthew.	Bartholomew.
8	Matthew.	Thomas.	Thomas.	Matthew.
9	James, son of Alpheus.	James.	James.	James.
10	Lebbeus, Thaddeus.	Thaddeus.	Simon Zelotes.	Simon Zelotes.
11	Simon, the Canaanite.	Simon.	Judas, bro. of James.	Judas, bro. of James.
12	Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	. . . . .

2. *First, Simon, who is called Peter*—Peter was a native of Bethsaida, in Galilee, and was the son of a certain Jonas, whence he is named on one occasion in the Gospel history Simon Bar-jona, that is, son of Jona, (Matt. xvi, 17.) Along with his brother Andrew, he followed the occupation of a fisherman at the Sea of Galilee. It is probable that before they became known to Christ they were both disciples of John the Baptist. John, in the first chapter of his Gospel, states this fact in regard to Andrew, and informs us that Andrew introduced Simon to our Lord, who gave him the Syriac name of Cephas, equivalent to the Greek *Petros*, which signifies a stone. It was not till some time after this introduction that Peter was called to the special discipleship, (Matt. iv, 18–20.) Most of what we know of Peter is derived from the New Testament, especially from the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and his own two epistles. Subsequent to his history in the Acts, he seems to have lived in the East, as one of his epistles is addressed to the Churches of Asia Minor and was written from Babylon. According to ecclesiastical history of authentic character, he was subsequently at Rome, and there suffered martyrdom under the reign of Nero The story that he was Bishop of Rome, upon which popery asserts her claim to supremacy, has no historical value.

Andrew his brother—The name of Andrew, though of Greek origin, was common among the Jews. The apostle of this name was, like his brother Peter, a native of the Galilean Bethsaida. He was a disciple of John the Baptist, and was led by John's testimony to believe in Jesus. He introduced Peter to our Lord, but was soon surpassed by him in eminence of apostolic character. Together with Peter, he was called from his fishing net to be a fisher of men. He is not very conspicuous in the Gospels. He is mentioned at the feeding of the five thousand, as the introducer of several Greeks to our Lord, and as asking, with Peter, James, and John, for an explanation of our Lord's remark touching the destruction of the temple. Tradition affirms that he afterward preached in Scythia, and that he was crucified at Patræ in Achaia.

James the son of Zebedee—James and John were the sons of Zebedee and Salome of Bethsaida, in Galilee. Their father seems to have been a

man of some wealth, prosecuting the business of fishing in the lake, with hired workmen. The respectability of the family is evidenced by John's acquaintance with the high priest, and easy circumstances are indicated by the fact that John became responsible for the maintenance of his Lord's mother. These two brothers were summoned to the apostleship soon after the call of Peter and Andrew, and, like them, paid a prompt obedience to the call. They were selected to be witnesses with Peter alone on several solemn occasions, as at the transfiguration, and at the agony at Gethsemane. It was for James and John that the ambitious Salome asked the premiership or place of prime honour in the Messiah's kingdom. They were styled by our Lord "sons of thunder," probably from their ardent temperament and bold eloquence as preachers. James was one of the first Christian martyrs, being slain by Herod Agrippa, as narrated in Acts xii, 2. Clement of Alexandria says that such was his firmness in death, that the officer at his execution was converted thereby to Christianity, and was martyred with him.

And John his brother—Of John we have said much in the foregoing notes. With the exception of Peter, he is the most conspicuous and the most interesting character in the apostolic college. To the books of the New Testament he contributed a Gospel, three epistles, and the Apocalypse. He survived all the apostles, living at Ephesus, perhaps as bishop, until about the close of the first century. His character appears to have been affectionate, and as some think, almost feminine. Wonder has been felt why he should have been called a son of thunder. But those who remember that he was the author of the Apocalypse can hardly be at a loss for a reason.

3. *Philip*—Philip was the fifth of the apostles who came from Bethsaida. He was one of the less conspicuous of the twelve. His first acquaintance with the Lord is narrated in the first chapter of John. To him our Lord put the question previous to the miracle of feeding the five thousand, which tested his faith, and proved him not to be very spiritual. The same want of spirituality is manifested by his request at the last supper: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." When certain Greeks desired of him an introduction to Jesus, he hesitated, and consulted Andrew concerning the matter. This indicates that he enjoyed less nearness to Jesus than other apostles. Tradition says that he preached the Gospel in Phrygia. Nor did his early want of spiritual elevation prevent his wearing a martyr's crown, as he is said to have incurred a martyr's fate at Hierapolis.

Bartholomew—The Hebrew form of this name is Bar-tolmai, or son of Tolma. Bartholomew is supposed to be identical with Nathanael, mentioned in the first chapter of John's Gospel. The reason for this supposition is that Philip and Bartholomew are mentioned together in the first three Gospels, while no Nathanael is mentioned; whereas in the fourth Gospel Philip and Nathanael are associated, without any mention of Bartholomew. Bartholomew, then, was the "Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile." He is not often distinctively mentioned by the evangelists. He is said to have preached the Gospel in India. It is an authentic fact of ecclesiastical history, that a copy of Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew was found by Pantænus in India, left there by Bartholomew. It is not known where he died.

Thomas—The two names of this apostle, Thomas and Didymus, signify in the Greek and Hebrew languages respectively, twin. Of his origin or family relations there is no authentic account. He is remarkable among the apostles for his rigid demand of sensible evidence of the Lord's resurrection. Yet his appears not to have been a diseased skepticism. His mind travelled slowly, and required a solid basis of truth. When he felt his foundations firm, his fidelity to his Lord was true, and his courage bold. Thomas is said, traditionally, to have preached the Gospel in Parthia. The Christians of the Syrian Church in India claim him as their founder, and call themselves by his name.

Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son* of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus;

4 [c]Simon the [2]Canaanite, and Judas [d]Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent

c Luke 6. 15; Acts 1. 13.—2 Greek, Kananites, that is, *Zealot*, as in Luke 6. 15.—d John 13. 26.

Matthew the publican—Of Matthew a full account is prefixed to his Gospel in this volume.

James the son of Alpheus—Called by Mark, James the Less. His father Alpheus is also called Cleophas, and his mother was Mary, sister of the virgin mother. James was therefore cousin of the Lord.

Our view is that there were three Jameses, of whom the following parallel sketches will give a correct view.

1. JAMES, son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of John.

One of the twelve. Matthew x, 2.

One of the three specially honoured disciples. Matthew xvii, 1; xxvi, 37.

Killed with the sword of Herod-Agrippa. Acts xii, 2.

2. (JAMES, the Less,) son of Alpheus or Cleophas.

One of the twelve. Matt. x, 3.

Jude the apostle was his brother, (Luke vi, 16,) and this Jude was author of Jude's epistle. Jude 1.

The mother of James was Mary, sister of the blessed mother; so that he was cousin of the Lord. John xix, 25; Luke xxiv, 10.

He had a brother Joses. Matt. xxvii, 56.

3. JAMES, son of Joseph and Mary, and half brother of the Lord Jesus.

Not one of the twelve nor at first a believer in Jesus. Matt. x, 2–4; John vii, 5.

Named among the family of Jesus. Matt. xiii, 55: Mark vi, 3.

Brethren of the Lord appear as believers, yet separate from the twelve. Acts i, 13, 14.

James, not one of the twelve, has a vision of the risen Lord. 1 Cor. xv, 5, 7.

James, though not of the twelve, postnamed an apostle. Gal. i, 19.

Called by Eusebius "the Just."

Resident pastor at Jerusalem.

"James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars." Gal. ii. 9.

"Paul went in with us unto James: and all the elders were present." Acts xxi, 18.

Certain came from James to Peter. Gal. ii, 12.

Present at council. Acts xv, 6–29.

Author of the Epistle. Martyred at Jerusalem.

Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus—He is called Thaddeus by Mark, and Judas (the Greek form of the name Judah) by Luke. He is the "Judas not Iscariot" mentioned by John, chap. xiv, 22. He was probably brother of James the Less, son of Mary, (sister of the virgin mother,) and therefore cousin-german of the Saviour. His name is found in the question of the Nazarenes, "James and Joses and Simon and *Judas*." He was probably the Jude who wrote the epistle bearing that name. Little or nothing is known of his subsequent history. But his grandchildren are summoned to appear before the Emperor Domitian, as has been mentioned in our notes on the first chapter of Matthew.

4. *Simon the Canaanite*—Least is known in regard to this apostle of all the twelve. He is not mentioned in the New Testament out of the catalogue. The epithet Canaanite is an Aramaic word, signifying Zealot. This name indicates that he had belonged to the fanatical sect of Judas the Gaulonite before he became an apostle of Jesus.

Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him—Luke styles him the *traitor*, that is, betrayer. His name is uniformly brought last because he was the least respected. The name Iscariot is the Greek form for Isch Kerioth, or man of Kerioth. Kerioth was a small town of Judea. Judas is conspicuous among the apostles for dark traits of character, and the events of a dark history. So much will

forth, and commanded them, saying, [e]Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of [f]the Samaritans enter ye not:

[e] Chap. 4. 15.

[f] 2 Kings 17. 24; John 4. 9, 20.

have to be said of him in our future notes, that we may say very little here.

§ 57.—Charge to the Apostles, 5–42.

The unity of this discourse demonstrates the oneness of its delivery, a point disputed by Olshausen and others. It consists properly of three parts. The *first* (5–15) directs their demeanour during this present trial mission. The *second* (16–23) predicts their trials and persecutions through their whole apostolate. The *third* (24–42) states the duty of suffering, the struggle to ensue, and the results, namely, the reward and penalty of the acceptance or rejection of their Gospel. The discourse, therefore, is complete and symmetrical. There is not a sentence or a word inappropriate to the occasion.

I. Directions for their Present Journey, 5–15.

This first part of the discourse is also divisible into three parts: 1. Their journey and business, 5–8. 2. Their provisions, 9, 10. 3. Their reception, 11–14.

5. *Go*—This was the word—Go. It embraced the commission of an apostle, and it embraces the mission of every preacher. Christ is his starting point, the world his field, souls his object; and he is not to stand, but to move; not to stay, but to go.

Not into the way of the Gentiles—Our Lord's direction first tells them where not to go. The *way* or route through the nations and tribes lying out of Palestine, is prohibited. *Any city of the Samaritans*—Our Lord forbids not going into the *way* of the Samaritans, but into any *city* of theirs. Samaria lay between Galilee and Judea. The *way* from one to the other therefore lay through Samaria. Into this *way* our Lord himself went, but not into any *city* of that section. The Gospel might be dropped by them as by our Lord himself, passingly and by the *way*, but not be directly carried into any centre of population.

Why did our Lord thus limit his apostles to Palestine and to Israel? For the same reason, we may reply, that he made Israel primitively his chosen people. The whole Old Testament dispensation was limited to Israel. Amid the apostacy of the nations, God deposited his truth, his ordinances, and his oracles for safe preservation with one people. Upon one land he concentrated the light of his truth. These deposits were there held in reserve for the fulness of the times, in order that, when the proper period should arrive, that light might be diffused, and ultimately fill the whole earth. As he who would fill a whole room with light first deposits the light in the lamp, so God, to illuminate the nations, first deposits his truth in his lamp, his chosen people. It was fitting, therefore, that this first mission should not be limitless and without concentration. The land of the Messiah should be the place for preaching the Messiah. Israel, unfaithful as he had been, was still the best prepared medium to receive and propagate the Messiah's doctrine. The oracles, the prophecies, the types, the temple, the sacrifices, all of which pointed to the Messiah, were still in Israel. Jews were therefore the first receivers and first proclaimers of the Gospel. As Christ had chosen twelve tribes from the nations, so he chose twelve apostles from the tribes. It was the mission of the apostles to indoctrinate the tribes, that the tribes might indoctrinate the nations. But after the Lord's resurrection an enlarged commission, embracing the world, was conferred upon them. They were to go into all nations, and preach the Gospel to every creature.

The pecular history of the *Samaritans* is mostly learned from the Old Testament. After the revolt of the ten tribes Samaria became their capital, and from it the population generally received the name Samaritans. In the ninth year of Hoshea, king of Israel, the main body of the better population were taken captive and transported by Shalmanezer to

6 [g]But go rather to the [h]lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 [i]And as ye go, preach, saying, [k]The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out

[g] Chapter 15. 24; Acts 13. 46.—[h] Psa. 119. 176; Isa. 53. 6; Jeremiah 50. 6, 17; Ezekiel 34. 5, 6, 12, 16; 1 Peter 2. 25.—[i] Luke 9. 2.—[k] Chap. 3. 2; 4. 17; Luke 10. 9.

Assyria. 2 Kings xvii. To fill their place, a population of Assyrians was colonized by the same king in northern Palestine. These idolators were assailed by lions; and considering their depredations to be produced by the anger of Jehovah, the God of Israel, they sent for a priest of the tribe of Levi, who came by their wish and dwelt in Bethel, to teach them the religion of the true God. A mixed religion as well as a mixed people resulted. Idolatry and Judaism were combined in their doctrines; Assyrian and Israelite blood were blended in their race. When the Jews returned from their captivity to Judea, feuds arose between the Samaritans and Jews, which last to the present hour. In the reign of Darius Nothus, king of Persia, Manasses, son of the high priest of the Jews, married the daughter of Sanballat, the governor of Samaria; and being required by the Mosaic law to divorce her, he preferred to go over to the Samaritans. Under the patronage of his father in law he became Samaritan high priest, with a temple erected for him on Mount Gerizim. From that time Jew and Samaritan became hateful to each other.

In our Saviour's time Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. John iv, 9. The worst thing a Jew supposed he could utter of Jesus was, *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.* John viii, 48. Our Saviour in the present verse recognizes the Jews as the covenant people in distinction from Samaritans; but on several occasions he manifested his purity from the Jewish malignity against them. He made a Samaritan the hero of one of his parables, in disparagement of a Jewish priest and Levite. Luke x, 33. The Samaritans, many of them, believed upon him. John iv, 29. See also Luke ix.

Of the Samaritans but a few families now remain, namely, at Nablous, the ancient Shechem. They have a venerable copy of the law, strictly keep the Sabbath, observe the ancient festivals, and firmly expect the Messiah.

6. *But go rather*—Having told them where not to go, our Lord now teaches them whither they should go. *Lost sheep*—Lost, as having forsaken the true shepherd, and wandered from the true fold. Yet still they are *sheep*, not *wolves* They are children of the covenant, and especially are they the sheep, who are predisposed and ready to obey the true voice of the shepherd when heard. *House*—That is, family or lineage.

7. *As ye go*—Our Lord here implies that they would continually extend their missionary travels. They were to be true itinerants, travelling after they had preached, and preaching as they travelled.

The kingdom of heaven—A kingdom which is the opposite of the kingdoms of this world, and still more of the kingdom of hell. Of this kingdom the crown prince is Messiah. When, therefore, they proclaimed the approach of this kingdom, they of course implied the Messiah's coming.

8. *Heal the sick*—The preaching was to be confirmed by the miracle. The miraculous powers were a foretaste and premonition of the nature of that kingdom. They were the first rays of its manifestation; and the powers of that kingdom, exercised by these apostles, prove them its true heralds. The four evils which these miracles removed, namely, sickness, leprosy, death, and devils, were all tokens and products of the reign of hell. *Raise the dead*—This clause, being omitted by some manuscripts of the New Testament, is suspected by some able critics to be an interpolation. The absence of any account of such miracle by them performed, does, indeed, prove nothing; for no account is given of any performances

devils. [l] freely ye have received, freely give.

9 [m] [3] Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor [n] brass in your purses;

10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet [4] staves: [o] for the work man is worthy of his meat.

l Acts 8. 18, 20.—*m* Mark 6. 8; Luke 9. 3; 10. 4; 22. 35.—3 Or, *Get.*—*n* Mark 6. 8.

4 Gr. *a staff.*—*o* Luke 10. 7; 1 Corinthians 9. 7, &c.; 1 Timothy 5. 18..

during this mission. But the supposition of so great a miracle stands opposed to the general analogy of that state of pupilage in which the apostles remained during the Saviour's life. *Freely give*—Sell no miracles; sell no Gospel. As the apostleship, the Gospel, and the power were received by you unbought, so give that Gospel unsold. All this freeness, however, presupposes that the gratitude of those whom you freely bless will, not, indeed, *pay* you, but freely *give* you all your needs require. The miracle by which you save other's lives and souls, must not sustain your own. You are not to live by miracle.

9. *Provide*—Thus far our Lord has described their errand; he now comes to their equipment; which is to be no equipment at all. Whoever has money in his pocket, raiment upon his person, may keep them and go; but nothing additional must he provide. The Saviour here specifies the three current metals which formed the money of the day. Parallel to these we have, at the present day, gold, silver, and copper, making the eagle, the dollar, the cent. Not a brass penny or farthing was the apostle to provide for his journey. *Purses*—The folds of the *girdle* served, as a Jewish purse, to carry money. But allusion may be made to the custom of sewing money in a girdle or belt, to be worn next the skin, for safe keeping.

10. *Nor scrip*—The *scrip* was a wallet slung by thongs upon the person, to contain provisions or other necessaries. They are, as Dr. Thomson states, "merely the skins of kids stripped of wool and tanned by a very simple process." Dr. T. well adds "By the way, the entire 'outfit' of these first missionaries shows that they were plain fishermen, farmers, or shepherds; and to such men there was no extraordinary self-denial in the matter or the mode of their mission. We may expound the 'instructions' given to these primitive evangelists somewhat after the following manner: Provide neither silver, nor gold, nor brass in your purses. You are going to your brethren in the neighbouring villages, and the best way to get to their hearts and their confidence is to throw yourselves upon their hospitality. Nor was there any departure from the simple manners of the country in this. Neither do they encumber themselves with two coats. They are accustomed to sleep in the garments they have on during the day, and in this climate such plain people experience no inconvenience from it. They wear a coarse shoe, answering to the sandal of the ancients, but never take two pairs of them; and although the staff is an invariable companion of all wayfarers, they are content with *one*. Of course, such 'instructions' can have only a general application to those who go forth, not to neighbours of the same faith and nation, but to distant climes, and to heathen tribes."

Nor yet staves—The plural of staff. According to the parallel passage in Mark, our Lord expressly permitted a staff. Some have, therefore, found an imaginary contradiction in the passage. To reconcile the discrepancy, commentators have imagined that a single staff was permitted, but not two staves or more. But who ever heard of a traveller providing himself with a number of staves? The true meaning is, that he who had a staff might take it, but he who had not should not provide it.

Workman is worthy of his meat—Humanly speaking, indeed, every man is entitled to an equivalent for what he gives. The man who gives his talents, his acquirements, his labour for a people's good, is humanly entitled to pay. Hence, in a true sense, the people do not give, but pay. It is not a charity but a debt. There is a pecuniary obligation as well as a divine requirement

11 [p]And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into a house, salute it.

13 [q]And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: [r]but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 [s]And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, [t]shake off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, [u]It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

16 ¶ [x]Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:

p Luke 10. 8.——*q* Luke 10. 5.——*r* Psa. 35. 13.
s Mark 6. 11; Luke 9. 5: 10. 10, 11.

t Neh. 5. 13; Acts 13. 51; 18. 6——*u* Chap. 11. 22, 24.——*x* Luke 10. 3.

Yet who can pay the value of the Gospel? See note on verse 8.

11. *Inquire who in it is worthy*—Worthy to receive the offer of the Gospel by their readiness to receive it and to entertain its ministers. The apostles enter a town and inquire who is spiritually minded, where lives a pious Jew, or what man is predisposed to believe in the celebrated Jesus of Nazareth. Him they conclude to be worthy, and to his house they apply for admittance.

12. *Salute it*—According to the customary form among the Jews, namely, "Peace be to this house." But this was not to be a mere form. In that phrase of technical politeness, religion should breathe a divine power. It is not a compliment, but a prayer and a blessing.

13. *Your peace return to you*—The blessing they cannot receive. Resume it, and bear it away with yourself. And when thus rejected be careful that no anger of yours shall mar the peace that comes back to you.

14. *Dust of your feet*—Such was the custom of stricter Jews in departing from a heathen city. But henceforth the rejecters of Jesus, though Jews by blood, are heathen in heart. The meaning of the symbol of shaking the dust from your feet, is solemn and striking. It declares the city polluted, and not a particle of it shall adhere to the apostle's person. It is given over to itself, and consigned to its own destruction.

15. *Sodom and Gomorrah*—Genesis xix. For their sins these cities were destroyed by a miraculous fire from Jehovah. But, as Jude informs us, this was but a symbol of eternal wrath, by which they were set forth as *suffering the vengeance of eternal fire*. The temporal fire is a visible emblem of the invisible fire never to be quenched.

It shall be more tolerable—It is to be remarked that our Lord here speaks in the future; that is, a time is coming at some future day. What future day that is, he now specifies. *The day of judgment*—Of that day of judgment Jesus gives a vivid description in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. See also Rev. xx. *Than for that city*—Our Lord is not here threatening the innocent bricks and walls, but the guilty inhabitants of the cities who reject his Gospel. And from his words we learn: 1. That there is a future day in which the inhabitants of the earth, at the different periods of its history, are to stand before the judgment-seat of God and receive their sentence. 2. The degree of punishment will be measured according to the privileges enjoyed and the guilt incurred. 3. Acceptance of the message of God when sent is the only method of escape and the only means of salvation.

II. Predictions of Apostolic Endurance of Persecution, 16–23.

In this second part our Lord expands the view from the present trial mission, so as to comprehend the warfare and sufferings of their entire apostolate.

16. *Sheep in the midst of wolves*—A most impressive image of the contrast between the meek messenger of the

[y] be ye therefore wise as serpents, and [z 5] harmless as doves.

17 But beware of men: for [a] they will deliver you up to the councils, and [b] they will scourge you in their synagogues;

18 And [c] ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 [d] But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for [e] it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 [f] For it is not ye that speak,

y Romans 16. 19; Ephesians 5. 15.——*z* 1 Corinthians 14. 20; Philippians 2. 15.——5 Or, *simple.*
a Chapter 24. 9; Mark 13. 9; Luke 12. 11; 21. 12.
b Acts 5. 40.

c Acts 12. 1; 24. 10; 25. 7, 23; 2 Tim. 4. 16
d Mark 13. 11, 12, 13; Luke 12. 11; 21. 14, 15.
e Exod. 4. 12; Jer. 1. 7.——*f* 2 Sam. 23. 2; Acts 4. 8; 6. 10; 2 Tim. 4. 17.

Gospel and the persecutors by whom he will be surrounded. Helpless, unarmed, undefended, to all appearance his only destiny is destruction.

Wise as serpents, harmless as doves—The secret stealth of the serpent has rendered him a favourite Oriental image of cunning. But the same word is here used that we find in the Septuagint, Gen. iii, 1: "*The serpent was more subtle* than any beast of the field." *Harmless as doves*—By the same symbolism, abounding in Scripture, the dove is the emblem of innocence and purity. By this combination of emblems of contrasted character our Lord describes the true Christian wisdom. It is innocently artful; it is simple yet sharp-sighted; it is inventive to accomplish schemes of good.

As the serpent is the bodily emblem of Satan, so the dove is the bodily emblem of the Holy Spirit. The true apostle is to be shrewd like Satan, yet pure like the Spirit of his Master.

17. *Beware of men*—These *wolves* are *men.* And men, as such, are depraved in heart. Of all such, in their depraved, unregenerated character, have a care, for evil is to be expected from them. The evils to be expected our Lord next describes. *Councils*—The smaller courts in Palestine, yet including the grand Sanhedrim in Jerusalem. *Scourge you in their synagogues*—Scourging is mentioned as a punishment in the Mosaic law. (Deut. xxv, 13.) The criminal, being laid upon the ground, was scourged with a whip of three lashes, so that thirteen blows should inflict thirty-nine stripes. This was the forty save one which St. Paul received, 2 Cor. xi, 24. *In their synagogues*—The synagogue was the ordinary place of the Jewish courts of justice. Mark xiii, 9; Acts xxii, 19.

18. *Brought before governors*—Procurators and proconsuls. Such were Pilate, Felix, and Festus. *And kings*—Such were Herod, Agrippa, and the Roman emperor. *For a testimony against them*—A memento in the great day of judgment, that the Gospel had been preached unto them, and had been rejected by them. *And the Gentiles*—For our Lord is now contemplating a field of trial far beyond the boundaries of Palestine, to which he had limited their present trial mission. From the humble encounters which they were to undergo before the magistrates and mobs in the towns of Palestine our Lord mounts to their arraignments before the great ones of the earth and their expanded missions into the various Gentile nations. Here is a quiet yet signal prophecy of the spread of the Gospel in distant lands, and an intimation of the persecutions which marked the progress of Christianity for several centuries.

19. *Take no thought*—Our Lord here earnestly places the mind of the persecuted apostle on its true basis. Let him renounce all earthly tempers and human ingenuity, and cast himself in simple, Christlike dependence upon divine aid.

20. *It is not ye that speak*—Their words will be God's words. In the demoniacs the devils spake through the human organs. In the arraigned apos-

but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

21 [g]And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death.

22 And [h] ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: [i] but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

g Mic. 7. 6; verses 35, 36; Luke 21. 16.——*h* Luke 21. 17.——*i* Dan. 12. 13; chap. 24. 13; Mark 13. 13.

tles the Holy Spirit shall speak, making their voice his voice, and their tongue his organ. *The Spirit of your Father*—It is God's Spirit, and at that moment he recognises you as sons of God. Hence our Lord does not here say, My Father, but places the protecting fatherhood of God directly over his apostles.

The assurances here given that premeditation of their speech was unnecessary to the apostles before their persecutors, are not to be rashly applied to every preacher in the administration of the Gospel. A neglect of preparation for the pulpit is carelessness; an avoidance of it under the expectation of inspiration is fanaticism. No doubt a divine influence attends a faithful administration of the word, but not so as to supersede the best and fullest exertion of the human faculties.

We have here the doctrine of inspiration stated in its strongest form. In the apostles, in the moment of trial, the Holy Spirit would reside, and the words they spake should be his words. Its existence with the apostles, at any rate, in certain exigencies, is here beyond doubt asserted. And who can affirm, that in those sacred documents, the New Testament Scriptures, the same inspiration does not exist. If the apostles were furnished with this inspiration in their momentary times of trial, how much more important, that in recording their words for ages for the instruction of the Church and the conversion of the world, they should possess the same high qualification.

21. *Brother shall deliver up the brother to death*—Persecution shall arise, in which all natural ties shall be disregarded. These predictions were amply fulfilled in the first ages of Christianity. *Shall deliver up*—Shall give information of them to the magistrate, and shall surrender them to the officer or government in pursuit of them. *Children shall rise up against their parents*—The children shall start up, accuse their parents of being Christians, and cause them to be put to death.

22. *Shall be hated of all men*—That is, of all men out of the Christian community. Tacitus, the Roman historian, says, like a true pagan, that "the Christians were convicted of enmity to the human race;" Jews hated them as revolters from their own religion. Pagans could tolerate each other, and respect and worship each other's gods. But the Christians abhorred all paganism, and so all pagans abhorred them; thus, Christians were hated of all men, whether Jews or Gentiles. The Christian was surrounded on every side by Jewish and by pagan rites. Every hour of the day, and at every turn, he was called upon to manifest his aversion to them. The consequence was, that while every other sect was tolerated, Christianity was the object of bloody persecution. *For my name's sake*—This endurance of persecution, and this abhorrence of false religions, was neither a fiery fanaticism nor a vain superstition. It was for Jesus's sake. It was suffering for truth, for Christ, and for God. *Endureth to the end*—To the end of his life and probation. To have once put faith in Christ is not the full condition of salvation. Faith, and perseverance of faith to the end, are the complete condition. That faith may be renounced. The Saviour once accepted, may be afterward rejected. Apostacy, total and final, may forfeit the reward.

23 But [k] when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not [6] have gone over the cities of Israel, [l] till the Son of man be come.

k Chap. 2. 13; 4. 12; 12. 15; Acts 8. 1; 9. 25; 14. 6.

6 Or, *end*, or, *finish*.
l Chap. 16. 28.

23. *Persecute you in this city*—Our Lord now momentarily reverts to the present trial and specimen mission upon which they are just proceeding. It is to towns and cities, rather than to rural districts, that they are going. Nay, they are commencing, as it were, the entire circuit (which they will never complete) of the cities of Palestine. They have no time to delay and fight the battle in cities that reject them. Driven from one city, let them hasten to another. They will not have visited even then all the cities of Israel before their special mission to Israel will be closed. Jesus will *come* at his resurrection, and give them a new commission for all the nations of the earth.

The command to *flee* was little accordant with a false human courage. But a heroism such as the world admires is not what Christ required. Christians who acted from the spirit of opposition, or the love of glory, were very apt to apostatize in the time of danger. The true martyr never sought death; never made a display of heroism; and never failed when, reposing faith in Christ, he meekly suffered for his name.

The Son of man—We have before remarked that this epithet was usually applied to our Lord by himself alone. See note on Matt. viii, 20. Its first application to the Messiah is in Dan. vii, 13: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom," etc.

Upon this passage we may remark:

1. The Jews of all ages applied this pictorial description to their future Messiah. Our Saviour, therefore, in claiming this title, and habitually applying it to himself, claimed the title of Messiah.

2. This picture and title intimate that the Messiah would possess a human nature, and spring from a human origin, and therefore refer primarily to the humility of the Messiah. With a pure humility, therefore, does our Lord make it his own habitual epithet for himself.

3. Yet the title includes also his exaltation and glorification. He is seen "in the clouds of heaven." He is led as a Son into the presence and before the throne of his Father Almighty. There is he invested with a divine royalty. Beneath him is placed a kingdom universal and eternal. This is the kingdom of *heaven*, yet it rules over the earth, comprehending authority over all nations.

4. This scenic picture has a complete fulfilment in the resurrection and ascension of Christ; when coming in body from the tomb, and in soul from Hades, he announced that *all power was given to him*, and ascended to the presence in glorified state of the Father Almighty. There was he invested with a universal kingdom, and took his seat on the right hand of the majesty of God. There shall he reign until he has subdued all enemies under his feet. Compare note on xvi, 28, and xxviii, 18.

Till the Son of man be come—The apostles will not have gone over the cities of Israel till that *coming*, foreseen by Daniel, shall have withdrawn them from their special mission to Israel, and given them a mission to the world.

Of this expression, *till the Son of man be come*, very different interpretations have been given by commentators.

It has been referred to the judgment day, or second advent of Christ to judge the world. But this event did not take place in a shorter period than was requisite for the apostles to have gone over all the cities of Israel.

It is referred, however, by the great body of commentators, to the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus Stier gives a very plausible exposition, importing that the

24 [m]The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If [n]they have called the master of the house [7]Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household?

m Luke 6. 40; John 13. 16; 15. 20.

n Chap. 12. 24; Mark 3. 22; Luke 11. 15; John 8. 48, 52.—7 Gr. *Beelzebul.*

apostles will not be able to complete the circuit of Israel before that Christ, by his providence, will have overthrown the Jewish state, and have abolished the externalities of the Jewish dispensation. Nevertheless I am unable to adopt this view as I shall show more fully in my notes on Matt. xxiv and xxv. I will here remark, that the destruction of Jerusalem is, I think, nowhere called the *coming* of Christ. There is nothing in that event to render it a *terminus* of the past, or a commencement of the future. Judaism ended at the crucifixion. At that moment her ritual, her sacrifices, her temple, her priesthood, her whole status, were null, and nothing in the world. The resurrection and ascension were the inauguration of the new dispensation. And what explains this clause specially is, that then the cities of Israel were no longer the circumscribed field of the apostolic mission, but a universal commission was given. Hence it is that our Lord charges his apostles that, with the speediest circuit, they would not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be *come*. Compare note on xvi, 28, and xxviii, 18.

III. The Duty, the Struggle, and the Issue, 24–42.

The duty: The reasonableness, the safety, and the reward of confessing Christ, 24–33. *The struggle:* A division between the nearest connections, a stern necessity of preferring truth to human ties, 34–39. *The issue:* All that receive Christ in his apostles, and who benefit and further their mission in faith, shall join them in the reward, 40–42.

This, the closing part of the discourse, stands in close connection with the train of thought which it completes. The previous part has described their mission and duties as apostles; what follows describes rather the case of those to whom they preach, yet including also those who preach. If persecutions must be suffered, to suffer is reasonable, it is safe, it attains a reward.

The Duty, 24–33.

24. *Disciple is not above his master.* So, according to many Jewish proverbs, the pupil of the rabbi was far his inferior. If the master undergo indignity, still deeper insult must the servant accept. And so with what force could our suffering Saviour, who endured the cross, require his disciples to endure by his own previous yet unparalleled example! He is our precedent for suffering, our pattern in suffering, but infinitely above us in the measure of suffering. He is our Lord, not by suffering less, but in the supremacy of his endurance.

25. *Called the master of the house.* Our Lord presents himself now under a slightly new figure. In the last verse he was a rabbi, with his pupils. In the present expression he is a householder, with his domestics. Their foes have not shrunk to call *him* by the most opprobrious epithets; still less respect can be expected for *them*. *Beelzebub.*—This word is the Greek form of the name of Baal-zebub, (the Philistine god worshipped at Ekron,) signifying *the lord of flies*. See 2 Kin. i, 2. But the reading of the word in this verse, best supported by the manuscripts, is, by a slight alteration, *Beelzeboul*. This is undoubtedly here the true form. The Jews were accustomed to express their contempt of a thing by some slight change of its name, which gave it a disgusting or even indecent meaning. *Beelzeboul* signifies lord of dung. And the word dung was also their contemptuous epithet for idolatry, since they intended to give the filthiest possible name to what they considered the vilest possible sin. *Beelzebub*, therefore, they changed to Beel-

26 Fear them not therefore: [o]for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 What [p]I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the house tops.

28 [q]And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

o Mark 4. 22; Luke 8. 17; 12. 2, 3.—p Luke 8. 10; John 16. 13, 25; 2 Cor. 3. 12.

q Isaiah 8. 12, 13; Luke 12. 4; 1 Pet. 3. 14.

zeboul, lord of dung, or perhaps, idolatry. No worse epithet did they feel themselves able to invent for Jesus. It was perhaps from the title *lord of idolatry*, thus acquired, that Beelzebub was reputed prince of devils. And in the extremity of their hatred, their attributing to Jesus the name of this supreme demon, indicated their consciousness of the mighty power he manifested.

And now the discipleship of Christ is a great family, and if its enemies have launched their foulest calumnies against its illustrious head, what right have its members to expect exemption from reproach?

26. *Nothing covered, that shall not be revealed*—All their words and deeds of darkness and violence shall be exposed in the broad light of God's judgment.

27. *What I tell you in darkness*—My words uttered in privacy, or enveloped in parables, shall also come forth. As their deeds are to come to the light of condemnation, so my Gospel shall come forth to publication, to vindication, and to victory. *That speak ye*—Be ye its publishers. *In light*—In publicity. So far from allowing persecution to suppress the word, carry it forth from this preparatory retirement and proclaim it to the world. *Hear in the ear*—The pupil of the rabbi held his ear intent to receive the utterances of his master. *Upon the housetops*—It is still a custom in the East to make public proclamation to the city from a housetop. Dr. Thomson says: "At the present day local governors in country districts cause their commands thus to be published. Their proclamations are generally made in the evening, after the people have returned from their labours in the field. The public crier ascends the highest roof at hand, and lifts up his voice in a long-drawn call."

28. *Fear not them which kill the body*—Neither miraculous power nor divine promise insures the apostles against bodily harm or bodily death. But they are enjoined to possess a superiority to fear of these corporeal injuries. And in these words is the primal source of the martyr spirit. It is courage founded on faith. *Body...soul*—We have here the two parts of man's compound nature placed in contrast. They are two separate things. The body is not the soul. The soul is not the body. This is demonstrably the doctrine of the text. *Them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul*—From these words, it follows that the body may be dead, and the soul alive. Men can murder the body, they can extinguish its corporeal life. They may burn it to ashes, and scatter its particles to the four winds. Yet still the soul is alive. No blows can murder it, no fire can burn it, no water drown or quench it. Nothing less than this can be the meaning of the text, and against the text no materialism can stand. *But rather fear him*—Namely, God. Fear, then, and fear as the dread of punishment, is a right and suitable feeling. And those who say that such a feeling is too base to be indulged, are contradicted by this text. And those who deny any punishment from God after the death of the body, contradict these words of Christ. *To destroy both soul and body*—The Lord does not say *kill* both soul and body. To destroy is not to kill, still less to annihilate, but to *ruin*. Our Lord's words teach, not the dismissal of the soul *from existence*, but its catastrophe and ruin *in exist*

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a [8] farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 [r] But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

8 Gr. *assarion*, equal to three farthings sterling, or one cent and a half.

r 1 Sam. 14. 45; 2 Sam. 14. 11; Luke 21. 18; Acts 27. 34.

ence. And this is an evil, a destruction, which we are bound to *fear*, as a possible reality beyond our bodily death. *In hell*—In Gehenna. This word Gehenna, or valley of Hinnom, in its primitive and literal sense, designated a gorge south of Jerusalem, otherwise called Tophet, where the offals of the city were ordinarily burned. As a place of defilement and perpetual fire, it became to the Jewish mind the emblem, and the word became the name, of the perpetual fire of retribution in a world to come. Hence, loose reasoners have endeavoured to maintain that this valley was the only hell. And upon this sophism the heresy of Universalism is mainly founded. But the present text demonstrates that beyond the death of the body, and therefore in a future state, there is a hell or Gehenna, which the soul may suffer, more terrible than bodily death, and more to be feared than any evil that man can inflict. God is the author of that evil; it lies beyond death, it is executed upon the soul as well as the body. No plausible interpretation can expel these meanings from this text.

The following statement is from Kitto's Cyclopedia:

"Hell is represented by *Sheol* in the Old, and by *Hades* in the New Testament. But hell, as the place of final punishment for sinners, is more distinctively indicated by the term *Gehenna*, which is the word translated 'hell' in Matt. v, 22, 29, 30; x, 28; xviii, 9; xxiii, 15, 33; Mark ix, 43, 45, 47; Luke xii, 5; James iii, 6. It is also distinctively indicated by such phrases as 'the place of torment,' (Luke xvi, 28;) 'everlasting fire,' (Matt. xxv, 41;) 'the hell of fire,' 'where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,' (Mark ix, 44.) The dreadful nature of the abode of the wicked is implied in various figurative expressions, such as 'outer darkness,' 'I am tormented in this flame,' 'furnace of fire,' 'unquenchable fire,' 'where their worm dieth not,' 'the blackness of darkness,' 'torment in fire and brimstone,' 'the ascending smoke of their torment,' 'the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone,' (Matt. viii, 12; xiii, 42; xxii, 13; xxv, 30; Luke xvi, 24; comp. Matt. xxv, 41; Mark ix, 43–48; Jude xiii; comp. Rev. xiv, 10, 11; xix, 20; xx, 14; xxi, 8.) The figure by which hell is represented as burning with fire and brimstone is probably derived from the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as that which describes the smoke as ascending from it, (comp. Rev. xiv, 10, 11, with Gen. xix, 24, 28.) To this coincidence of description Peter also most probably alludes in 2 Pet. ii, 6."

Is it not more probably derived from the fire of Gehenna?

In regard to the valley of Hinnom, see supplementary note, page 351.

29. *Are not*—Our Lord now farther states an additional reason for the feeling of safety in suffering in his behalf. They are under an infallible divine protection. *Two sparrows*—The sparrow is the very emblem of a being of little consequence. *A farthing*—Equal to about half a cent of our money. *Fall on the ground*—That is, perish or expire. *Without your Father*—Not *their* Father, but *your* Father. They are his creatures, you are his children. They are but animated forms, you are undying souls. They are naturally perishable, you are immortal. They are taken care of not so much for themselves as for you.

31. *More value than many sparrows*—Were men as transient in existence as sparrows, they would be of as

32 [s] Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, [t] him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 [u] But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

s Luke 12. 8; Rom. 10. 9, 10.—*t* Rev. 3. 5.
u Mark 8. 38; Luke 9. 26; 2 Tim. 2. 12.

little value. The words of the poet would then be true, who says of the Deity,

"He sees with equal eye, as God of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall."

If man be perishable as the sparrow, he approaches no nearer to infinity than the sparrow. To the eye of the Infinite, therefore, both would be equal; but since man's immortal nature endures as long as the Deity himself, he thereby becomes infinitely more valuable than the animal that perisheth. Under such a protector, then, as God, and so valuable in his sight, why should we fear to suffer, since he will never permit us utterly to perish for his truth? Fully, therefore, does it follow that it is most safe to suffer for Christ.

32. *Whosoever*—Whether of yourselves who preach, or of those who hear your preaching. *Shall confess me*—Shall acknowledge in the face of persecution that I am his Lord and Master. *Him will I confess*—It requires courage and truthfulness to confess one amid enemies and despisers, however glorious he may be. So it requires constancy and truthfulness to confess an unworthy and humble creature before a company of grand and glorious persons. The former courage is displayed toward Christ by the Christian in this world. In recompense, Christ will display the latter constancy and truth in the day of final judgment.

33. *Whosoever shall deny me...him will I also deny*—The shame of man on earth, of Christ in the world to come. *Before my Father*—Our Lord styles God your Father and my Father; but in very different senses. He is their Father as they are his children and under his protection. God, the sovereign, is his Father when, as his only begotten Son, he judges the world.

The Struggle, 34–39.

The result of Christ's coming and of their preaching will not be merely *peace*, but a *sword*, a *struggle*, a series of struggles, dividing communities, severing the nearest ties, and requiring a preference of the true and the right above the loved and the dear.

34. *Think not that I am come to send peace*—From the meekness of my character and my Gospel you might imagine that I am to send *peace*, not only in *spirit*, but in *result* among mankind. But not so; my mission is to separate the righteous from the wicked. My goodness is to attract to itself all the good who have affinity with it. And this affinity of the good for the good, and of evil for the evil, will produce a division, a ferment, a strife, a *sword*. When the right goes forth into a world of wrong there must be war. Each principle will rally its own adherents and its own army under its own banner, and terrible will be the struggle until right or wrong, heaven or hell, attain the victory.

35. *I am come to set a man at variance against his father*—So God set faithful Abraham at variance against his father, the idolatrous Terah. So religion sets the pious child in opposition to the impious parent. So temperance sets the sober child at variance with the drunken father. For the right, the pure, the good are at variance with the wrong, the defiled, the bad. Light is as much opposed to darkness,

34 [v] Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance [x] against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

v Luke 12. 49, 51–53.
x Micah 7. 6.

36 And [y] a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.

37 [z] He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 [a] And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 [b] He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

y Psalm 41. 9; 55. 13; Micah 7. 6; John 13. 18.
z Luke 14. 26.

a Chap. 16. 24; Mark 8. 34; Luke 9. 23; 14. 27.
b Chap. 16. 25; Luke 17. 33; John 12. 25.

as darkness is to light. Truth would annihilate error, and holiness hates sin. *The daughter against her mother*—The Christianized daughter shall abhor the lusts and licentiousness of her heathen mother. The converted mother shall turn with horror from the impurity of her heathen daughter. *The daughter-in-law*—The ties of marriage are often dearer than the ties of consanguinity. Yet even these must yield to higher claims and the ties of God and truth, higher than any ties of man to man.

36. *A man's foes...of his own household*—The division line of principle shall cut like a straight sword right through the centre of the house. Upon either side that line, born of the same blood, are the opposing adherents of heaven and hell.

37. *He that loveth father or mother more than me*—Think not that the sacrifice of kindred ties is to be made by the wicked alone. Earthly affections, when they come in collision, must be postponed to divine obligations. Truth is more authoritative than a parent. The Redeemer hath done more for us than the nearest relative. Where the drawings of affection would seduce us to sin their power must be rejected.

38. *Taketh not his cross*—As our Saviour had not been crucified, some have affirmed that he could not have uttered these words at this time. And some sceptical writers have affirmed that it is put into the mouth of Jesus in this passage by an anachronism on the part of the evangelist. But death by crucifixion, though a Roman punishment, had already been made by the Roman dominion perfectly familiar to Jewish eyes. It was the natural subject of allusion whenever the highest punishment of the law was to be mentioned. And for the same reason that it was the most obvious punishment specified in this discourse, it was the mode of our Saviour's death. It was the representative method of capital execution. If the Lord was conscious that this was to be the mode of his own death, it would be rather a covert allusion to the secret future fact, than a proper prediction or prophecy.

Our Lord here indeed specifies what did not take place at his own crucifixion. One did follow him, taking up not his own cross, but the cross of the Saviour. But what the Lord here commands is, that each follower should take up, not his Saviour's cross, but his own. The requirement is, that as Christ bore his own cross to his own crucifixion, so his followers should bear each his own cross to his own crucifixion. So the great crucified leader is followed by an endless train of crucified followers. They are crucified symbolically, in all their sufferings of mind or body, in behalf of Christ and of truth. Each follower who hath the spirit of his Master, is crucified in fact or in readiness of spirit. The Spirit of Christ is the spirit of martyrdom.

39. *He that findeth his life—Findeth* his life by avoiding the *cross* mentioned in the last verse. Our Lord uses the word *findeth* here in the sense of *saveth*, in order to form an antithesis with the word *loseth*.

But the greatest difficulty in the interpretation of this verse is in the word *life*. The Greek word ψυχή, psyche, signifies either *life* or *soul*, inasmuch as it is the presence of the *soul* in the body which constitutes it a *living* body. It is the same word as is rendered soul in

40 ¶ [c]He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

41 [d]He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 [e]And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

c Chap. 18. 5; Luke 9. 48; 10. 16; John 12. 44; 13. 20; Gal. 4. 14.

d 1 Kings 17. 10; 18. 4; 2 Kings 4. 8.—e Chap. 18. 5, 6; 25. 40; Mark 9. 41; Heb. 6. 10.

verse 28. In our view it should have been rendered *soul* throughout the discourse. The force of the antithesis, then, in the present verse would be this: He that, by avoiding the cross, findeth or saveth his soul, (as the vivifier of his body,) shall lose it in the future world. He attains a present, earthly, and corporeal *retention* of his *soul*, by the future loss of his soul in the world to come. *He that loseth his life*—Loseth his soul from his body by a martyr's death. *Shall find it*—In the world of heavenly blessedness.

The Result, 40–42.

All that receive the apostles, and God and Christ, in them, shall share with the apostles in their reward.

40. *He that receiveth you*—The phrase *that receiveth you*, imports undoubtedly receiving in faith their mission. It implies the heartfelt acceptance of Christianity, and the reception of the saving grace of the Gospel. *Receiveth me*—As his accepted and sufficient Saviour.

41. *He that receiveth a prophet*—That is, with a faithful acceptance of his message. *In the name of a prophet*—With a full recognition of his character and mission, and in spite of the persecutions of a faithless world. *Shall receive a prophet's reward*—Sharing both the prophet's faith and the prophet's danger, he shall share the prophet's reward.

42. *One of these little ones*—A tender appellation for his apostles. They were *sheep* in the midst of *wolves*, they were harmless like *doves*, they were tender like *little ones*. *A cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple*—In the glowing climate of Palestine, the pursued and persecuted apostle might find a cup of cold water the preservation of his life. And whosoever, in recognition of his discipleship, that is because he was a disciple of Jesus, and from love to his Master, shall furnish him this precious boon, *shall in no wise lose his reward*. His faith has worked by love, and has been justified by works.

Here, therefore, is no shadow of a denial of the doctrine of justification by faith; but an assertion that works *in faith* are graciously rewarded of God. And in such faith the slightest work, the simplest cup of cold water, is a noble investment for a great reward.

It is said that in India the Hindoos go often a great distance for water, boil it to render it healthful, and then, in honour of some idol, stand by the roadside until night offering drink to travellers. Such an act of faith in Christ performed for his apostles cannot fail of its reward.

This commissioning of the apostles opens the SIXTH PERIOD of our Lord's history upon earth. It is the period of his expanding ministry. See Historical Synopsis. His apostles go forth; the Baptist retreats from the world; the fame of Jesus fills the palace of Herod; and the faith of his disciples is so established that at the next period he commits to them the keys of his kingdom and prepares for his departure. Matt. xvi, 13–21.

Neither Matthew nor either of the other evangelists gives a detailed account of the mission of the apostles. While our Saviour was upon earth, and preaching, it seems as if the evangelist held all other ministries of little account. Mark tells us (vi, 12, 13) that "they went out and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many devils,

CHAPTER XI.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 [a] Now when John had heard [b] in the prison the works of

a Luke 7. 18, 19, &c.

b Chap. 14. 3.

and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." And in Mark vi, 30: "The apostles gathered themselves unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught." And this was followed by their crossing over Lake Gennesaret, and the feeding of the five thousand. We are informed in the first verse of the next chapter, that when Jesus had finished this discourse, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *Jesus had made an end of commanding*—This verse properly belongs to the close of the preceding chapter, upon which see the closing note. It informs us how Jesus was engaged during the trial mission of his apostles; while each couple took their own way, the Master himself was upon his Father's business.

§ 39.—THE MESSAGE OF JOHN TO JESUS, AND THE SAVIOUR'S ANSWER, 2–6.

Matthew here inserts, not in its chronological order, a narrative, possessed of special interest, of a message sent by John from the solitude of his prison to Jesus. It possesses a marked completeness in itself, and should be read as one whole. See remarks at the close of the chapter.

John was imprisoned probably in the fortress of Macherus in Perea, east of the Dead Sea. At what time precisely this message was sent is not certain, but earlier than the events of the last chapter. Jesus was probably at Capernaum.

2. *John*—John the Baptist was like his prototype Elijah. See notes on Matt. i, 1; xvii, 10, 12. As the former was driven by Ahab into the wilderness, so the latter was shut up in prison; and as the former at a certain period (1 Kings xix, 1–13) bore his solitude impatiently, so the evangelist now shows us of John that he bore his imprisonment impatiently.

John had heard...works of Christ—Near eighteen months now had John remained in prison, a period about as long as the exercise of his active ministry. His disciples, apparently, had access to him, and through them the rumours of our Lord's *works* might reach his ears. Successively he might have heard how Jesus had organized his twelve apostolates—one for every tribe of Israel; how he had healed the servant of the centurion of Capernaum, had lately raised the widow's son at Nain, and had filled Palestine, and even Syria and Idumea, with the renown of miracle and preaching. These were indeed *mighty works;* but why did not the reign of righteousness and glory commence its era?

Sent two of his disciples—In regard to this message of John to our Saviour, there are at least two opposing opinions. One view, that supported by Watson and by Stier, and held by orthodox commentators more generally, is that John sent his message to Jesus not so much to satisfy any doubts of his own, as for the instruction of his disciples in the true character of Jesus from the lips of the Lord himself. This view is sustained by these commentators on the ground of John's character. They dwell on the high office of John as the official witness for Jesus, and expatiate on the scandal upon Christianity arising from the supposition that *he* doubted the genuineness and truthfulness of his Lord. In spite, however, of all these opposing arguments, which appear to us to misapprehend the opinion they controvert, we are compelled to adopt the view that John sent his inquiry for the satisfaction of his own mind.

The doubts in John's mind were not such as tended in the slightest degree to invalidate his previous testimonies to Jesus, or the evidence on which they

Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou [c]he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see:

5 [d]The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and [e]the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not [f]be offended in me.

c Gen. 49. 10; Num. 24. 17; Dan. 9. 24; John 6. 14.—d Isa. 29. 18; 35. 4-6; 42. 7; John 2. 23; 3. 2; 5. 36; 10. 25, 38; 14. 11.

e Psa. 22. 26; Isa. 61. 1; Luke 4. 18; James 2. 5
f Isa. 8. 14, 15; chap. 13. 57; 24. 10; 2C. 31; Rom. 9. 32, 33; 1 Cor. 1. 23; 2. 14; Gal. 5. 11; 1 Pet. 2. 8.

rested. John's misgivings were not in their nature *skeptical*, but *anxious*. He doubted not the divinity of Jesus, but queried what was to be his future course. Like others, he expected a more rapid development of the Messiah's kingship; and as Jesus seemed to be permanently a peaceful prophet, he questioned whether a different royal Messiah was not yet to appear. The very fact that he sent to Jesus himself for relief, as the fountain and oracle of truth, shows that he still acknowledged him as one the latchet of whose shoes he was unworthy to unloose. The import of his message was: "I acknowledge thee profoundly as ever as the Son of God, 'the way, the truth, and the life,' whose unworthy harbinger and messenger I am. But thy present acts and words indicate that thou art to be a teacher and a worker of miracles. Art thou also the predicted King of the glorious divine reign about to come in, or must we wait for another?" John then did not retract or doubt the past; he only queried the future.

There is something severe in the whole of our Lord's demeanour and language, as if reproving this shaking of John's higher faith in God. Just so at a time when the firmness of Elijah's faith was shaken, (1 Kings xix,) the Lord rebukes him, and instructs him with signs and miracles.

3. *Art thou he that should come*—Here is no doubt a reference to Malachi iii, 1, where it is said: "Jehovah whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple." The *slowness* of our Lord to develope the glory of his kingdom seemed to John not to agree with the *suddenness* ascribed to the Messiah. *Do we look for another*—John here seems to be running into the same train of reasoning as that which induced the later Jews to adopt the theory of two Messiahs, one of whom (called by them the Son of Joseph) should fulfil the *humiliations* described by the prophets as belonging to the Messiah; and the other (whom they called the Son of David) should fulfil the *glorious part* of the prophecies. I do not mean that John adopted or was acquainted with this Jewish *theory;* but that the same *idea* (namely, the *contrast* lying between the humble suffering Messiah and the glorious Messiah, Prince of the kingdom of God) which prompted that *theory* prompted his question.

4. *Show John again*—The words plainly show that it is John, not his disciples, who is to be taught the truth. To John's question Jesus gives no direct reply. To his "*Art thou he?*" the Saviour responds not, "*I am he.*" He holds a reserve, partly severe and partly modest, or rather self-respecting. He performs most noted miracles, as Luke informs us, before the face of the messengers, and sends them back to John with a quotation from the prophets, which declares that those very miracles belong to the Prince Messiah. Just so the doubts of his type, Elijah, were relieved (1 Kings xix) by a sign.

5. *The blind receive their sight*—Our Lord here refers to Isa. xxix, 18, and other passages where these works are made the proofs of the Messiah.

6. *Offended in me*—The word *offend*

7 ¶ [g]And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? [h]A reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? [i]A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses.

9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, [j]and more than a prophet.

10 For this is *he*, of whom it is written, [k]Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of

[g] Luke 7. 24.—[h] Eph. 4. 14.—[i] 2 Kings 1. 8; Isaiah 20. 2.

[j] Chap. 14. 5; 21. 26; Luke 1. 76; 7. 26.—[k] Mal. 3. 1; Mark 1. 2; Luke 1. 76; 7. 27.

ed. here as elsewhere, means to be *made to stumble;* that is, *to fall into sin by some misunderstanding.* The Lord here utters a warning to John. To John, we say, for the singular pronoun, "Blessed is HE," is so pointed as to be very unaccountable if it be not intended. The Baptist is not in wickedness; but he is in *danger* of being offended in Jesus. This brief and somewhat stern procedure constitutes the whole of his reply to John; and the disciples of John departed with it to their master.

§ 39.—JOHN'S POSITION AND CHARACTER. 7–15.

Our Lord now, to the people, takes occasion to discriminate the precise character of John, both in its greatness and its infirmities. Not being in the kingdom of God, John does not know its King, but asks of the heir apparent, "Do we look for another?"

7. *What went ye out into the wilderness*— The wilderness of Judea, bordering on the Jordan, where John preached and baptized. Our Lord asks in effect what was their expectation in regard to the true character of John, to whose preaching and baptism they had resorted.. *Reed shaken with the wind?*— Did you expect, what John now appears to you, a trembling vacillator, shivering in every breeze of doubt and difficulty? Such is not John's true character. And here our Lord, with singular beauty, borrows his illustration from the *reeds* which lined the banks of the Jordan, and shivered in the breezes that swept it.

Both Watson and Stier argue that John could not have sent his message to relieve his own doubts, because our Lord here denies that he was a reed shaken by the wind, or a soft, pliant man. Very true. But what suggested those particular denials? Plainly, the understanding that John's mind is now apparently wavering; which understanding is based upon the assumption that the inquiry is his own. Our Lord admits the assumption, but denies the inference; and then he proceeds (10–14) to state John's real case, with all its greatness, its littleness, and its palliations.

8. *Man clothed in soft raiment*— Were you attracted into the wilderness of Judea to see an effeminate courtier, who could not bear the severities of a desert or of a prison, as John now perhaps appears? Certainly not. The very *direction* you took shows the reverse. You would not have gone to the wilderness, but to the palace, perhaps of Herod, to find a soft dressed gentleman.

9. *A prophet*— They went to find something better than kings or courtiers, namely, a prophet of God. And our Lord assures them, with an emphasis, that they were not mistaken.

10. *Behold, I send my messenger*—John is more than a prophet; he is a messenger; nay, even THE *messenger before* the Messiah's *face.* Our Saviour here quotes Mal. iii, 1.

11. *Born of women*—The world thinks that kings, generals, and statesmen are the greatest of men. But God measures differently. The divine head of Christ

women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is [l] greater than he.

12 [m] And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven [l] suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 [n] For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive *it*, this is [o] Elias, which was for to come.

15 [p] He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 ¶ [q] But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the

l Luke 1 15; 7. 28; John 5. 35.——*m* Luke 16. 16. [l] Or, *is gotten by force, and they that thrust men.*——*n* Mal. 4. 6.

o Mal. 4. 5; chap. 17. 12; Luke 1. 17.——*p* Chap. 13. 9; Luke 8. 8; Rev. 2. 7, 11, 17, 29; 3. 6, 13, 22. *q* Luke 7. 31.

is the loftiest of all men's heads, and his nearest servant's is next. *Least*—More properly rendered *less*, or *inferior*. A man who is truly *in* the kingdom of God; who knows its true nature, both by fuller developments and by spiritual experience, is above making such a mistake as poor John, with all his greatness of position and character, committed.

12. *Suffereth violence*—Our Lord here shows that John is not alone in his mistake. It is the error of the day. From the time of John's first appearing to the moment of our Lord's speaking, men have been disposed *violently* to hurry the kingdom into a premature existence. They *will* have it *now*. They will *take it by storm*.

The kingdom of heaven, as all admit, is here the kingdom of God on earth, the Christian dispensation. It is compared to a city under siege, or rather under assault by storm. Those who, like John, are impatient for its arrival, wondering why it does not come, and demanding of Christ whether he is really going to come out and be its king, are its *captors*, or rather *ravishers*. *The kingdom suffers violence* from them; and these *violent* captors *are taking it*, forsooth, *with an onset*.

Mr. Watson's explication, (which is the popular one,) in which the "violent" are zealous Christians who conquer and win heaven by their holy warfare, is wrought out by him with much eloquence. But it does not occur to him to show what relevancy such an idea has to the current of thought or the subject in hand. Our interpretation makes Jesus explain the temper of John's impatient inquiry. That other interpretation makes a very good idea, but nothing to the purpose.

Until now—Even unto the present stage of its development.

13. *Until John*—The parallel passage in Luke runs thus: "The law and the prophets were until John; since that the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." The word for *presseth* in the original signifies to *force one's self by violence in*. The phrase describes the impatience with which men were entering into the kingdom of God in no genuine way, and truly not at all.

14. *This is Elias*—Elijah. Elijah came to restore the theocracy. He laboured, like John, with but partial success; and like John, was somewhat impatient at small results.

15. *Ears to hear, let him hear*—He that has faculties of attention, let him use them well upon this point.

§ 39.—Conduct of that Generation to John and Jesus, 16–19.

With all its impetuous zeal for the kingdom of God, the conduct of the generation toward the harbinger and the King is most capricious and childish.

16. *This generation*—The contemporaries of John and himself. *Children sitting in the markets*—The ancient markets were places in which not only men transacted their business,

markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, [r]We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, [s]He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, [t]a friend of publicans and sinners. [u]But wisdom is justified of her children.

20 ¶ [v]Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

r 1 Kings 1. 40; Isa. 28. 9, 13; 30. 29.—s 2 Kings 9. 11; Jeremiah 29. 26; Hosea 9. 7; John 7. 20; Acts 26. 24.—t Chapter 9. 10.—u Luke 7. 35 v Luke 10. 13, &c.

but children performed their amusements.

17. *We have piped unto you*—*We*, that is, the multitudes who heard the preaching of John. Ours, say they, is the cheerful and the merry mood. We look for a prophet and preacher who can respond to our cheerful temper. But you are an austere denouncer of sin, not sparing the cheerfulness of life. We have piped, but you have refused to dance to our tune. *We have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented*—*We*, that is, the hearers of Jesus, are pensive in character. We love the weeping and denouncing preacher. But you are genial and joyous. *We have mourned and you have not lamented.*

18. *For*—Our Lord now applies his figure of the piping and mourning children to himself and John. *John came neither eating nor drinking*—That is, as our note on Matt. iii, 4, has said, John ceremonially exhibited a perpetual fast. He came not accepting any festal invitations or joining any banquets, but adopting a religious diet indicative of pure abstinence. *He hath a devil*—Instead of being a *prophet*, inspired of God, he is, say they, a *demoniac*, dwelling, like other demoniacs, in the desert, and howling forth his denunciations.

19. *Eating and drinking*—Not living, like John, in the desert, on a diet that indicated fast; but joining in the social enjoyments of life, blessing the wedding and banquet with his presence, and preaching the Gospel of deliverance and joy. *Man gluttonous*—The sanctimonious hypocrites made even the gladness of the Saviour's Gospel a charge against him. There is no form of virtue or excellence which wicked men cannot malign, and charge with being a vice which bears some analogy to that virtue. *Wisdom is justified of her children*—Besides these sets of captious *children* who capriciously assail the Gospel in its ministry and preaching, there is a choice body of other *children*—the children of *wisdom*. This *wisdom* is the *wisdom of God*. 1 Cor. ii, 7. It is the *wisdom of the just*—the blessed Gospel. This *wisdom*, however cavilled at by the *children* of perversity and captiousness, *is justified*, that is, vindicated and maintained against cavils, *by her children*.

§ 40.—Upbraiding of the Impenitent Cities, 20–24.

20. *The cities*—The *children* who *justified divine wisdom* were but the few. Whole cities rejected it, to whom it had been offered in all its beauty and power. *Upbraid*—Rebuke, reprove. *Repented not*—Our Lord upbraided not the bare walls or buildings of the cities, but the individuals in them who could repent of sin, but would not. As the Lord passed from considering John's wavering faith to the faithlessness of that generation, so now he passes from that generation to the cities who had been most favoured, and were therefore most guilty of want of faith. *Mighty works*—There are those who maintain that miracles, even if performed, are no proof of a divine message. But this is as contrary to common sense as it is to Scripture. Mankind fully believe with their ordinary

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago [w]in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, [x]It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, [y]which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, [z]That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

[w] Jonah 3. 7, 8.—[x] Chap. 10. 15; ver. 24.

[y] Isa. 14. 13-15; Lam. 2. 1.—[z] Chap. 10. 15.

common sense that if a man in the name of God perform undoubted miracles, he is a messenger from God. Such is the doctrine of our Lord in this and many other passages.

21. *Chorazin*—The three cities here named were all on the northwest side of the Lake of Gennesaret; but of their precise position no infallible account can be given, as no certain traces of them now exist. But the latest researches, those of Dr. Thomson, will probably establish the opinion that Chorazin is identical with the modern Khorazy. See note on Matt. iv, 13, and the map. *Tyre*—This celebrated city, the commercial emporium of ancient Phenicia, was founded two hundred years before the time of Solomon. It stood on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, about midway between Egypt and Asia Minor. It was one of the wealthiest and most celebrated cities of antiquity. *Sidon*, or Zidon, was a still more ancient Phenician city, standing on the same shore, about forty miles north of Tyre. It was situated within the limits of the tribe of Asher, but was never conquered by Israel. It was celebrated for commerce and manufactures. It is now a town of some fifteen thousand inhabitants.

22. *More tolerable*—Because Tyre and Sidon had had less opportunities for knowing the truth. This text, with many others, teaches the doctrine of different degrees of retribution, proportioned to the guilt. The clearness of the light against which sin is committed aggravates the guilt. See note on chap. x, 15.

23. *Exalted unto heaven*—The heaven here spoken of is the literal abode of the blest, and the word is used in the literal sense. The figure, if there be any, is in the *exaltation*. Figuratively, they are said to be *exalted* to a prospective and possible heaven by the offer of the Gospel. Its forfeiture by impenitence opens before them a prospective hell. *It would have remained*—Our Lord here denies the doctrine of fatalism. Events can result differently from what they do.

This text illustrates also that true view of God's foreknowledge which is implied in his attribute of omniscience. God foreknows not only all things *actually* future, but all things *possible*. And he knows all the *results*, both possible and certain, of all *possible* future events; and this not as weak man knows futurities, by experience of the past, and by inferences and reasonings from cause to effect. He foreknows all future actualities and possibilities by his own perfect attribute of infinite knowledge, which is eternal, uncaused, and independent.

Nor does God's knowledge, as predestinarianism affirms, depend on his determination or decree. For God's knowledge is his own divine faculty or attribute of omniscience, while his determination is an act. To say that God's knowledge depends upon his determination, is to say that his attribute depends upon his action. The act of God presupposes the attribute as being before it. For to suppose God to determine antecedent to his knowledge is to suppose that he determines without knowledge, and in the dark. God's

25 ¶ [a]At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because [b]thou hast hid

a Luke 10. 21.—*b* See Psa. 8. 2; 1 Cor. 1. 19, 27; 2. 8; 2 Cor. 3. 14.

foreknowledge is antecedent to his predetermination, and is the ground of it.

§ 40.—Thanks for the Revelation to Babes, 25–26.

25. *At that time*—And doubtless in the same connection. For in contrast with the unbelieving *cities* above named, there were a choice few, *the children of wisdom*, (verse 19,) who accepted the Gospel in its simplicity. He thanks the Father that to such the Gospel is revealed, (25, 26,) affirms his complete concurrence with the Father in the whole plan, (27,) and issues an invitation for all to come in accordance with that plan, (28–30.) *I thank thee*—The divine arrangement was so wise and good that our Saviour was grateful at its completion. *Hid*—What was hid? The spiritual kingdom above described. How hid? By the very fact that God has constituted it a *spiritual* kingdom; for eyes that wickedly persist in being gross and carnal cannot see spiritual realities. The plainest divine truths, though placed before them, are *hid*, as the plainest objects by daylight are hid from the eyes of the owl; only the owl's blindness is natural and innocent, theirs is voluntary and guilty. God does right in establishing spiritual things; that their spirituality renders them *hid*, is the sensual man's fault. Those who understand by this text that God has from all eternity made salvation impossible to be attained by a fixed part of mankind, wrong divine justice, and abuse our Lord's words.

Yet it is not at all probable that the thanks of our Lord rested upon the fact that the Gospel was *hid;* but upon the fact that *though hid*, it was wisely and graciously *revealed* to its spiritual receivers. Parallel to this is the language of Paul: "God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed," etc. If in either passage we insert *although* after the word *that*, we shall obtain the actual meaning.

But it is asked by Calvinists and other predestinarians, has God not a predetermined plan for the regulation of all events? That God has determinations founded on his foreknowledge, we have illustrated in our note on verse 23. That God's plan, however, does not predestinate and fix all the wicked acts of wicked men, and then fix their damnation for committing those decreed acts, may appear from the following remarks by Dr. Fisk in his sermon on predestination and election:

"We acknowledge and maintain that God has a plan, one part of which is to govern his responsible subjects without controlling their will by a fixed decree; to punish the incorrigible, and save those who repent and believe. Does such a plan imply the necessity of a change, 'on condition that his creatures act in this or that way?' If indeed it was necessary for God to decree an event in order to foreknow it, this inference might be just. But as this is seen to be false, it follows that a perfect God, whose eye surveys immensity and eternity at a glance, and who necessarily knows all possibilities and contingencies, all that is, or will be, can perfectly arrange his plan, and preclude the possibility of a disappointment, although he does not, by a decree of predestination, fix all the volitions and acts of his subjects."

Wise and prudent—He calls them what they call themselves, and what, for this world, they may be called. But the carnal heart, however sagacious in carnal things, understands not the things of the Spirit. *Revealed them unto babes*—Babes, from the very fact that they received the truth in its simplicity; babes, as the statesmen of Rome, the philosophers of Greece, and the Sadducees of Judea, would style them. They are the ones who realize eternal things, but value low the temporal. If eternal things be unreal, they are not only *babes*, but *fools*. But if eternal things be real, these *babes*, so called because they re

these things from the wise and prudent, [c]and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 [d]All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; [e]neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

28 ¶ Come unto me, all *ye* that labor and are heavy

c Chapter 16. 17.—*d* Chapter 28. 18; Luke 1. 32; 10. 22; John 3. 35; 5. 22; 13. 3; 17. 2; 1 Corinthians 15. 27; Ephesians 1. 22; 1 Peter 3. 22 *e* John 1. 18; 6. 46; 10. 15.

ceive those things with simplicity, and ignore the depraved wisdom of the world, are wiser than the "wise and prudent."

26. *It seemed good*—It was not so done by God from mere arbitrary unreasoning and absolute will, but because it was *good*. It seemed right to the Infinite Mind. It seems right to all right reason. There is no demand in this passage for those favourite phrases, "divine sovereignty," "unfathomable and mysterious," "good pleasure," as if the divine administration were not founded in clear and obvious right.

§ 40.—Jesus, Lord of all, invites all, 27–30.

This passage, 25–30, and especially verse 27, is so entirely in the style of John, that we might almost suppose Matthew to have inserted here a brief memorandum of our Saviour's discoursing from that apostle's hands. Alford more probably explains it as a momentary strain of a whole style of discourses of our Lord, reported by none of the evangelists but John alone.

27. *All things*—The whole system of salvation. *Delivered unto me*—Put into my hands as Lord of the hidden kingdom of God. *No man knoweth the Son... neither...the Father*—These are *hid* (verse 25) as mysteries from all save Omniscience. *Whomsoever the Son will reveal*—So that the Son not only thanks the Father for the things *hid* and *revealed*, but is the agent in the accomplishment of the revelation.

And now having affirmed the exclusive *mode* in which the Gospel is by God revealed; and having, with an unspeakable sublimity, announced not only his consent and his unison, but his executive agency in that revelation, Jesus is ready to make proclamation to all; to all who will come and obtain that blessed Gospel revelation according to its own peculiar and exclusive method. For though the *method* be exclusive, the power and possibility of assenting, coming, and obtaining that Gospel are universal; and hence the call is justly universal. The call is addressed to a peculiar and exclusive class of character; yet all may join that class and come in that character. The *wise and prudent* may, if they choose, become the *babes*. And then they will cease to be those from whom the Gospel is *hid*.

28. *Come unto me—Me*, the very *me* to whom John has lately sent his message, Art thou He, or look we for another? Yet the very *me* who am the revealer (verse 27) of God to man. The very *me* who exists in ineffable unity with God the Father Almighty—this person now stands as in the centre of a labouring, laden, oppressed world, and sends his piercing, mellow, tender voice to all the suffering sons of sorrow to escape all bondage by entering his bonds.

Labour and are heavy laden—The poor peasantry and common people toil and sweat under the *burdens* of their masters, the middle classes. And these middle classes struggle beneath the pressure of a higher aristocracy. And the higher aristocracy are scorched by the intolerable rays of the emperor. And the emperor groans under the cares and weight of empire, and works as for his life that neither rebellion nor assassination may lay him low. High and low are alike *labouring and heavy laden*. For high or low there is no relief, no

laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek

f John 13. 15; Philippians 2. 5; 1 Peter 2. 21; 1 John 2. 6.

rest. Then says Jesus, "Come unto me—I will give you rest."

And I will give you rest—I, a spiritual Redeemer, am the one to redeem you. For know, all ye labourers, from lowest to highest, the real *burden* that bears you down is the *world* and the *flesh;* and your true oppressor is the *devil.* Be delivered individually from these, and you are truly *free.* Be delivered in mass from these, and you will cease to oppress each other. Thus is the same redemption a relief alike from internal and external oppression. *Rest*—No one can read the history of early Christianity without seeing that in its first Pentecostal power it was in the soul a fountain of peace and joy. Though the iron hand of despotism pressed heavy upon the world, and a fierce turbulence reigned among the tribes of the earth, yet the followers of Jesus rejoiced in a sweet resource within, which was a *repose* to the soul. When in the fulness of time its Pentecostal freshness shall return, and its abounding power be universally accepted; when those hapless sons of folly, "the wise and prudent," shall become *babes,* then not only will the individual soul feel that Christ can give the true *rest* within, but the nations of the world will acknowledge that he alone, the Prince of Peace, is the giver of universal repose.

29. *Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly*—My gentle spirit and soul-subduing doctrines can alone give that temper by which the soul of the man, and the soul of the living world, may come to their true *rest. Unto your souls*—Unless there be peace *within* there can never be peace *without.* Theorists and socialists will in vain attempt by external organizations to give peace. They are mistakenly endeavouring to work from the *without* to the *within.* Men's hearts need to be regenerated in order that a perfect organization of society may exist, or be

and [g]lowly in heart: [h]and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 [i]For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

g Zech. 9. 9; Phil. 2. 7, 8.—*h* Jeremiah 6. 16 *i* 1 John 5. 3.

maintained. Human institutions are what human hearts make them. The organization of society is generally as good as the moral and mental state of the mass will permit. When men's hearts become right, the true freedom may be attainable.

30. *Yoke...burden*—Men serve the world, and in that service they are like the sturdy ox; a *yoke* is on their neck, and a *burden* on their back. And this is true, as shown above, (note on verse 28,) of all classes, from lowest to highest. *Yoke is easy*—The *yoke* of Christ is freedom. The *service* of God is the highest and truest *liberty.* The laws of God are the laws of our highest nature; and he who comes under those laws does but do what is fittest, rightest, most happy, and most highly natural for him. When Christ gives his *law,* he gives a heart and a pleasure to keep that law, so that he who obeys it does as he pleases.

And now this chapter, from the second verse, must be read in one connection as a single historical piece. John sends his query to our Saviour in regard to his kingly Messiahship. Jesus answers John by deeds more than words. Then does he first draw that mingled portraiture of John, which exhibits the greatness of John as the testifier, but his littleness as the questioner. Starting from John, the Lord then upbraids that chilaish generation who cavilled at both him and John; he peals forth a strain of woes upon the impenitent cities who rejected him; soars into a lofty thanksgiving to his Father, who had yet revealed to the docile *babe* his kingdom; nay, he rises to the very height of his mysterious oneness with the Father; and from that height he finally descends to call the sons of men to accept his service as divine emancipator of their souls from bondage.

CHAPTER XII.

AT that time [a] Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were ahungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

2 But when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is

a Deut. 23. 25; Mark 2. 23; Luke 6. 1.

CHAPTER XII.

§ 33.—Plucking the Corn upon the Sabbath, 1–8.

Of this chapter the part 1–45 has a considerable completeness in itself. It is not inserted precisely in its chronological place; but the facts, though distant in time, stand in their chronological order, and are grouped together in order to show the deepening hostility which Jesus encountered from the Jewish religious leaders. The first two (§ 33 and § 34) occurred soon after the first assault upon Jesus at the passover, and were the proper prelude to the later instance of blasphemy in § 42, with its fearful denunciation, and the cavil of § 43, with its terrible parable. There is a marked increase in the intensity of the Pharisaic hostility.

Matthew places together these two miracles, not because occurring at the same time, but because they touched upon the same point, namely, our Lord's teaching as to the Sabbath.

Mr. Trench remarks: "The cures on the Sabbath actually recorded are seven in number, and are the following: That of the demoniac in the synagogue of Capernaum, (Mark i, 21;) that of Simon's wife's mother, (Mark i, 29;) of the impotent man of Bethesda, (John v, 9;) of the man with the withered hand; of the man born blind, (John ix, 14;) of the woman with a spirit of infirmity, (Luke xiii, 14;) of the man who had the dropsy, (Luke xiv, 2.) We have a general intimation of many more, as at Mark i, 34, and have already observed that the 'one work' to which our Lord alludes at John vii, 21–23, is perhaps not any of the miracles which he has recorded at length, but one to which we have no other allusion than that contained in these verses."

Our Lord's defence of himself for these miracles of mercy on the Sabbath brings from him the enunciation of the great principle, that positive and ceremonial institutions were really established for the highest good of man, and must give way whenever they come in collision with it.

1. *At that time*—Just after the second passover of Jesus's ministry. Commentators consider the time of this miracle as being fixed by the parallel passage in Luke vi, 1. Luke says it was on *the second Sabbath after the first.* This peculiar phrase literally interpreted would be "the second-first Sabbath," which is thus explained: From passover to Pentecost was seven weeks. The customary reckoning of these seven weeks was from the *second day* after the passover, and the *first* Sabbath after this *second* day was called the *second-first Sabbath.* The passover was in April; a time not too early for the ripening of the barley fields in the better parts of Palestine. *The corn*—The word *corn* suggests to an American reader incorrectly the idea of what is called Indian corn, or maize. The word in the text is used in the purely English sense of *grain*—including wheat, rye, or barley.

Dr. Thomson remarks: "I have often seen my muleteers, as we passed along the wheat fields, pluck off ears, rub them in their hands, and eat the grains, unroasted, just as the apostles are said to have done. This is allowable. The Pharisees did not object to the thing itself, only to the time when it was done."

It was lawful to pluck the ears, but not to apply the sickle in the standing corn of one's neighbour. Deut. xxiii, 25.

2. *Not lawful...upon the sabbath day*—The crime was not the walking, for they may not have walked more than a Sabbath day's journey; but the *plucking* and the *rubbing.* Now this was done to satisfy actual hunger, and

not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read [b] what David did, when he was ahungered, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat [c] the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, [d] but only for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the [e] law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, That in this place is [f] *one* greater than the temple.

7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, [g] I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

b 1 Samuel 21. 6.——*c* Exodus 25. 30; Leviticus 24. 5.——*d* Exodus 29. 32; Leviticus 8. 31; 24. 9.

e Num. 28. 9; John 7. 22.——*f* 2 Chron. 6. 18; Mal. 3. 1.——*g* Hos. 6. 6; Mic. 6. 6-8; chap. 9. 13.

doubtless was their only obtainable food. It was truly, therefore, hardly more than to put one's hands to the food upon a table. It may therefore be considered a striking instance in which the Jews had come to pervert the divine law in an over particularity about the letter.

3. *Read what David did*—Our Lord here is not arguing for a proper breaking of the law, but for its true construction. The mere formality of a ritual or strict letter of a positive precept is to yield to the demands of the true good, or the alternative consequence of essential evil. He shows this by an example of David, (1 Sam. xxi, 1–7,) who infringed the letter of the ceremonial law by obtaining from the priest and eating the showbread belonging to the tabernacle. To the necessity of preventing starvation the sanctity both of the showbread and of the Sabbath might yield. These institutions were both given in mercy, and it would be perverting their purpose to make them instruments of cruelty.

The *showbread* (in Hebrew, the *bread of the presence*, that is, of the *divine presence*) was placed first in the tabernacle and afterward in the temple of Solomon, on a table, in the Holy Place. As the temple was the house of God, so, symbolically, this was the *bread of God*. So the *candlestick* and other furnishings of the sacred place were emblems of the residence of Jehovah among his people.

5. *The priests in the temple profane the sabbath*—They perform what, on the reasoning of the Pharisees, would be profanation. The priests on that day killed, flayed, and dressed and burned the sacrifice, and baked the showbread. So that the law of itself made provision for its own profanation, as the Jews of the Saviour's time construed law.

It appears from the passage in 1 Sam. xxi, that it was *fresh* bread which David ate. But by the law (Lev. xxiv, 8) the fresh bread was set on the table on the Sabbath. Hence, Alford infers that our Lord might have drawn a double argument from David's case in regard to the Sabbath.

There is something striking in the remark that Jesus, who was king and priest of the new dispensation, draws his justifying example from a king and the priests of the old dispensation.

6. *One greater than the temple*—And, therefore, able to dispense with temple and ritual sanctities when they come in collision with the object of my mission, or the maintenance of my ministers in the performance of that mission. It in fact adds a force to our Lord's words, that the word *greater* is, in the Greek, in the neuter gender. Christ is a greater *existence* or *thing* than the temple.

7. *I will have*—I require of men the performance of mercy. *And not sacrifice*—Not sacrifice, or ceremonial performances, as a substitute for the performance of moral duties. It is useless to profess to be a pious man, without being an honest, just, and good man.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

9 [h] And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:

10 ¶ And behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, [i] Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep,

h Mark 3. 1; Luke 6. 6.

i Luke 13. 14; 14. 3; John 9. 16.

8. *Lord even of the sabbath day*—As the Lord said, in the sixth verse, that he was greater than the temple, now he affirms himself greater than the statute law of Moses; nay, he is greater than the Sabbath law established by God at the creation. Thus does he maintain himself to be the incarnate Legislator of the world. He is truly *God manifest in the flesh.* Our Lord here asserts his high dignity in order to silence the murmurings of the Jews at his assuming to change the fundamental interpretations of the law. But may we not also believe that he here hints, as Lord of the Sabbath, that some change would be made in its observance under the new dispensation of the Son of man?

In regard to the Sabbath we may here observe,

1. There is good proof that it was established on the day of the holy *rest* of God, at the end of the creative week. That *day* was the first Sabbath, just as that week was the first week. This Sabbath formed a part of the patriarchal religion, and was adopted with the great body of the patriarchal system into the law of Moses. Yet under Moses much that was specially Jewish was overlaid upon the original Sabbath, so that a double Sabbath, as it were, existed on the same day.

2. The decalogue, which is of perpetual validity, commands the observance of one day in seven as Sabbath or rest, (for *rest* is the meaning of the word Sabbath,) but lays down no unchangeable law as to the particular day.

3. After the resurrection of Christ the Jewish Sabbath, which was laid upon the primitive Sabbath, was abolished, and "*the Lord's day,*" (Rev. i, 10,) or Christian Sabbath, was superimposed upon another day. Thus the Christian Sabbath, being the same as the decalogue Sabbath, or the creation Sabbath, is of perpetual obligation and universal observance.

4. That Sunday is the "Lord's day," is clear from early Christian history; that it is the weekly holy day of the Christian dispensation is clear, because this day is alone mentioned as a sacred day after the resurrection; it is not identical with the overlaid Jewish Sabbaths, for they are abolished. It is, therefore, by necessity identical with the universal creational Sabbath, which is perpetual in its obligations.

§ 34.—Withered Hand restored, 9–21.

10. *His hand withered*—A case of *paralysis*, by which the hand was shrunken away, and the nerves of motion had become incapable of action. This has ever been regarded as an incurable disease. *They asked him*—Luke informs us that they were watching our Lord's movements that they might be able to accuse him of breaking the Sabbath. *That they might accuse him*—The position of the minds of the accusers of our Lord was peculiar and strange. They did not doubt that he was about to work a miracle; they expected it. But they are intending to make out that his miracles are *contrary to the divine law*, and so *immoral.* They would then have some ground for saying that he worked miracles by a diabolical power; which charge they did soon begin to make.

11. *And he said*—Our Lord proceeds to answer them by showing, from their own practice, that deeds of necessary mercy did not infringe the Sabbath day. *Pit*—Cisterns dug in the earth for the

and [k]if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

12 How much then [l]is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore [m]it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; [n]and it was restored whole, like as the other.

14 ¶ Then [o]the Pharisees went out, and [1]held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew *it*, [p]he withdrew himself from thence: [q]and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;

16 And [r]charged them that they should not make him known:

k See Exod. 23. 4, 5; Deut. 22. 4.——*l* Luke 12. 24.——*m* Mark 3. 4; Luke 6. 9.——*n* Luke 13. 13; Acts 3. 7, 8.——*o* Chap. 27. 1; Mark 3. 6; Luke 6. 11; John 5. 18; 10. 39; 11. 53.——1 Or *took counsel.*——*p* Chap. 10. 23; Mark 3. 7——*q* Chap. 19. 2.——*r* Chap. 9. 30.

purpose of water, into which animals often fell. It is said by Stier, that the Jews (probably in consequence of these words of our Saviour) were afterward accustomed to cover these pits with planks. Our Lord here does not merely convict the Jews on their own ground. He proves by this example, again, that they are making the preceptive law war against the law of universal benevolence.

12. *A man better than a sheep*—By as much as a man is better than a brute, by so much is it more justifiable to heal this man than to rescue your cattle.

The physician performs his work of preserving health and life rightfully on the Sabbath day; though a conscientious one will allow his profession to interfere as little as possible with his Sabbath duties. And so, though it is not lawful to employ the day in making property, it may be lawful to prevent destruction, as in case of fire.

13. *Stretch forth thine hand*—Our Lord here commanded an intrinsically impossible act. Yet the volition or will to stretch forth was not impossible. And when the will was exerted, power to accomplish was granted.

When men say that they cannot obey the will of God, because God's Spirit does not operate upon them, let them know that a graciously bestowed power from God is conferred on all, through the atonement, to will to obey, if they will use it. And as they proceed onward in the effort to obey, they will find divine strength supplied when needed and used. Let them truly exert, in the spirit of this man's faith, their graciously conferred powers, as Christ's Gospel directs, and they will find their powers energized and recreated.

14. *Then the Pharisees went out*—They were determined not to admit the defence which they could not confute, and were bent upon using the act to charge our Lord's miracles to a diabolical source.

Held a council—Mark says that the Pharisees at this council called in the aid of the Herodians. These were the partisans of Herod, who maintained the rightfulness of the Roman dominion over Judea, and the propriety of introducing Greek and Roman customs among the Jews. Thus did these sticklers for the law of Moses unite with its bold political subverters in order to accomplish their designs against Jesus. Little sincere surely could have been their burning zeal for that Sabbath and the law at the moment they were plotting thus with the overthrowers of both.

16. *Charged them...not make him known*—Our Lord is now sensible that his enemies are aroused. His deeds of goodness must be in secret. He who came to save men must hide his benefactions from the eyes of men. See note on Matt. viii, 4.

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

18 [s]Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, [t]in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He [u]shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A [v]bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

s Isa. 42. 1.—*t* Chap. 3. 17; 17. 5.—*u* Luke 17. 20; John 18. 36, 38; 2 Corinthians 10. 1.

v Psa. 51. 17; 147. 3; Isaiah 57. 15; Ezek. 34. 16; Luke 4. 18; Heb. 12. 12, 13.

17. *By Esaias the prophet*—The evangelist considers this quietude of our Lord as going to fulfil Isa. xlii, 1–4, a passage in which the Messiah is described, under the image of one of the ancient Hebrew judges, as establishing righteousness in the earth by the most silent and spiritual means and influences. It predicted these things:

1. That the Messiah should come from God, as his minister and *servant*. 2. That his own personal character should be of the most mild and gentle kind. 3. He should be most tender in his dealings. 4. He should give victory to truth and righteousness in the world. 5. That not only Jews, but Gentiles should trust in his name.

This prophecy, be it remembered, was delivered centuries before our Lord's birth, and was applied by the early Jews to the coming of the Messiah.

18. *Behold my servant*—Christ, though the Son, humbled himself, and took upon himself the form of a *servant*. *He shall show judgment*—That is, he shall *reveal* the principles of truth and righteousness to the Gentiles. Here the enlargement of the dispensation of the Messiah beyond the limits of Judaism (which was so great a difficulty at first even with our Lord's apostles and the Apostolic Church) is expressly predicted by the Old Testament prophets.

19. *He shall not strive*—Here the peaceful character of the Saviour is set in beautiful contrast with the greatness of his deeds. Though he rule the nations with his law, he shall be peaceful and noiseless. His victories shall be the victories of peace. The rulers of Christendom have sometimes spread Christianity by the sword; but that was in express contradiction both to the personal character of Christ and to the precepts and principles of his Gospel. *Strive*—To *strive* is to fight. Our Lord at this time retreated from publicity to avoid all contest or strife. *Nor cry*—He shall raise no *battle cry*. *Voice in the streets*—Rallying his partisans to the riot and the sedition.

20. *A bruised reed*—He shall be the tenderest of all conquerors to those who desire to submit to his authority. The spirit, *bruised* like a *bruised reed*, shall receive no crushing blow from him. He will be rather the tender cultivator, who will bind up and restore the broken plant, than the ravager, who will break its bruised stem. *Smoking flax*—Rather smoking *lamp-wick*. The submitting soul, whose life flickers like the last spark of the expiring *lamp-wick*, will find that He will not extinguish, but pouring in fresh oil will raise it to a blaze. *Judgment unto victory*—Tender as he is, he still shall conquer. *Judgment* here means rectitude, or righteousness, as laid down in the divine law and embodied in the Gospel. But this righteousness the Messiah shall send forth to victory, to conquest, and to triumph in the earth. So successful, though so meek, shall this subduer be.

21. *Gentiles trust*—The spirit of inspiration here paraphrases the words of the prophet, giving his essential meaning rather than the exact terms. In the book of Isaiah the words are, "The isles shall wait for his law." By *the*

22 ¶ [w]Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?

24 [x]But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by [z]Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus [y]knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then [z]his kingdom stand?

w See chap. 9. 32; Mark 3. 11; Luke 11. 14. *x* Chap. 9. 34; Mark 3. 22; Luke 11. 15.——2 Gr. *Beelzebul:* and so verse 27.

y Chapter 9. 4; Luke 6. 8; 9. 47; John 2. 25; Acts 1. 24; Revelation 2. 23.——*z* John 12. 31; 14. 30; 2 Corinthians 4. 4.

isles are meant the distant nations of the earth, especially those separated by water, and so the Gentiles in general. We have here a clear prediction that the religion of the Gospel shall become universal.

Mr. Gibbon objects to the proofs from prophecy, because they so commonly predict the Messiah as a conquering warrior. The present prophecy is one of those predictions that clearly show the descriptions of his warlike victories to be truly figurative representations of the triumphs of his holy doctrines.

§ 42.—Healing Demoniac, blasphemy of Holy Spirit, 22–37.

22. *With a devil, blind, and dumb*—Disease and possession are the product of sin, and they are thus found going naturally together. See note on chap. iv, 24.

23. *Amazed*—These fresh displays of love surprised and melted their hearts. They cannot but feel the movings of faith upon one so mighty and so benevolent. *Son of David*—They no doubt were aware that he was reputed to be of the royal line; and these miracles, coming thus from him, awakened a presentiment that he might indeed be the illustrious Son of David, predicted in the prophets as the coming Messiah.

24. *Pharisees heard it*—The miracle was reported doubtless to them for explanation. They felt that if his pure doctrines should prevail, their influence was at an end. The miracle they do not deny, but ascribe it to an infernal power.

Beelzebub the prince of the devils—So great and numerous are the miracles that they cannot ascribe them to any one less than the prince. Beelzebub was worshipped at Ekron, (2 Kings i. 1,2,) as the god of flies; that is, as the god who protected the inhabitants from the annoyance of gnats and flies. See note on chap. x, 25.

25. *Every kingdom divided against itself*—Our Lord proceeds to refute the slander that he is confederated with the prince of darkness. It is plain that he is working against the evil power. He is driving the infernal power from his strongest posts, and beating him back from his boldest incursions into the world. Now this would imply that the kingdom of evil was working against itself, and that Satan was in the act of self-destruction. No doubt the kingdom of evil is the kingdom of confusion, but it cannot be conceived that it should divide against itself and one half fight for the good.

26. *Cast out Satan*—Our Lord here assumes, what doubtless the Jews would grant, that to cast out Satan is the strongest proof that can be visibly given of hostility to Satan. It is a case of the directest possible issue. It is a point where the kingdom of God and of Satan come into direct hostile contact. Certainly, as the general fights the battle for one side, the side of good,

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by [a] whom do your children cast *them* out? therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then [b] the kingdom of God is come unto you.

29 [c] Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

31 ¶ Wherefore I say unto you, [d] All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven un-

a Mark 9. 38, 39.——*b* Dan. 2. 44; 7. 14; Luke 1. 33; 11. 20; 17. 20, 21.——*c* Isa. 49. 24; Luke 11. 21-23.

d Mark 3. 28; Luke 12. 10; Hebrews 46. 4, &c.; 10. 26, 29; 1 John 5. 16.

it is the highest possible proof that he is truly on that side.

27. *Your children*—That is, your disciples. That there were among the Jews *exorcists*, who at least professed to cast out devils, we know from the Apocrypha, from Josephus, and from Acts xix, 12–14. It appears by the writings of the earliest Christian fathers that this power of *exorcism* remained for some time in the primitive Church. The truth doubtless is, that as the power of Satan had been for a period extraordinarily manifest at our Saviour's coming, (see note on chap. i, 20,) by the fact of *possession*, so some power had been divinely allowed to the Jews to dispossess. If, therefore, the Jews looked upon the appearance of demoniac possession as an increase of the power of Satan in the world, and if they looked upon the power of expulsion exercised by their own sons as a benevolent power and hostile to Satan, what right had they to ascribe this stupendous mastery over evil spirits, displayed by our Lord and exercised by him in the most merciful way, to any power but the highest power of God? Judging our Saviour as they judged their own sons, they were bound to attribute his miracles to a gracious power.

28. *The kingdom of God*—So numerous and powerful had been our Saviour's works that the Jews had ascribed them, not to a spirit of common order, but to the very *prince* of hell. But if they were as beneficent as they were powerful, why not ascribe them to the prince of heaven, and so conclude that the kingdom of heaven had come?

29. *A strong man's house*—Our Lord here argues that his expelling devils proves his superiority over them. As a strong man enters the house of a weaker and spoils his goods, so our Lord enters the devil's tenement and despoils him of it.

30. *Not with me is against me*—Our Lord here illustrates by a proverbial maxim the contrariety of Satan's kingdom and his own, as shown by the opposite works of the two.

He—Any one; here spoken in allusion to Satan. *Not with me*—That does not harmonize with me in spirit and in action. *Is against me*—And therefore one is not to be considered the ally of the other, as you charge me with being the ally of Satan. *Gathereth . . . scattereth*—These words allude to a *gathering* in harvest. Co-labourers *gather* in concert; the ravager of their fields *scattereth* the produce.

31. *Wherefore*—That is, in consequence of what has just been said. This seems to imply either that the Pharisees had committed a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, or were in great danger of so doing. There is nothing to show conclusively which. *All manner*—All sorts of sin may upon repentance, through the atonement, be forgiven. *Blasphemy*—The original meaning of the word blasphemy is simply *reproach* or *slander*. At the present time it is applied almost exclusively in reference to the Supreme Being. It

to men: [e]but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

[e] Acts 7. 51.—[f] Chap. 11. 19; 13. 55; John 7. 12, 52.—[g] 1 Timothy 1. 13.

may therefore, in general, be defined "*the utterance of a presumptuous insult toward God.*" But as it may be as truly committed in *thought* or in *act* as in *speech*, it may rather be defined the *offering* a presumptuous insult to God. It is a great sin. Humanly speaking, there may be greater *crimes;* but there can be no greater *sin.* If the magnitude of an offence be measured by the rank of the dignity insulted, this must be pre-eminently an infinite sin. It is therefore the wonder and the glory of the atonement that it should be forgiven, or that the author of it should escape everlasting retribution. This passage informs us that such forgiveness, through the atonement, can take place, when the blasphemy and the insult infringe against the Father or the Son; but when the blasphemy finds itself appropriated by the Holy Ghost as an *insult to himself*, there is no forgiveness.

32. *Against the Son*—Olshausen has called special attention to the gradations of aggravation implied in the blasphemy successively against the Father and the Son and the Spirit. But perhaps in detail he has hardly so developed it as to bring out the true point.

Let it be remarked, that when sin is committed against the Father or the Son, neither is ever viewed as *withdrawing himself* from the sinner during the day of his probation. God, the Father, as Creator and Providence, still continues his mercies; and the atonement of God the Son is never probationarily withdrawn. But the Spirit does become grieved, and does become vexed and *depart.*

God the Father is contemplated as the original *back-ground*, so to speak, of Deity; God the Son is Deity *manifest* in the redemptive plan and dispensation; God the Holy Spirit is Deity, *specially in his sanctifying personality*, going forth as a Spirit of purity, making his trials to win and assimilate man to his own pure nature. As a pure Spirit, he is also represented as a *tender and a sensitive* Spirit. He is easily vexed and grieved and made to depart. On this point let us remark:

1. To *grieve*, to *vex*, or to *resist* the Holy Spirit does not of itself amount to this *blaspheming* the Holy Spirit. For all these, as matter of fact, are done, and yet the sinners do repent and be *saved.* And from this fact has perhaps arisen the real difficulty which commentators have found in this passage.

2. Nor is this *blasphemy* of the Holy Spirit the same as becoming hardened against impression, or becoming hopeless by continuance in sin, or as "sinning away the day of grace." It is plainly, however long the preparation, *one heinous act;* so heinous in itself as that the Spirit becomes, therefor, the sinner's *enemy.* Isa. lxiii, 10.

3. Not every *reproach*, nay, not every word or expression truly in itself blasphemous *toward* the Holy Spirit, not even with blasphemous intention, really reaches its aim; that is, really is accepted by the Holy Spirit as blasphemy *against* itself. Experience shows that such words are repented of, and, though perhaps not often, forgiven. Even a dignified human spirit will frequently refuse to impute to persons the full insult they intend. The mind of the Spirit itself is most pure, wise, and sovereign judge when the insult offered *to* itself shall be held as blasphemy *against* itself. Just as many a man of high and sensitive honour *will not* be insulted by certain characters, either from their insignificance, or their irresponsibility, or their ignorance, so the Holy Spirit will not always accept of intended insult offered to itself as this blasphemy against itself.

4. When the Holy Spirit does so think right to accept and feel the full force of a blasphemy offered in thought, word, or deed *against* itself, then

32 And whosoever [f]speaketh a word against the Son of man, [g]it shall be forgiven him: but

whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, [h] it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

33 Either make the tree good,

h Mark 3. 29.

does it resent the insult with a justice that knows no mercy. It makes not the decision capriciously or arbitrarily, but with perfect measurement of the actual guilt; and then with absolute finality it abandons the sinner, never to return. The man is left in a hardness that will never relent. He will live doubtless in a state of moveless indifference until his departure to his own place. This results from the very fact of his being abandoned. The atonement, though not withdrawn, will never avail, and the Spirit of holiness is his perfect and pure "enemy." That relation is as immortal as the nature of both.

Whosoever speaketh against—A softer phrase is here used than *blasphemeth.* Nakedly taken, it would imply that every uttered word derogatory to the Holy Spirit is unpardonable. The phrase *to speak against,* must, however, be interpreted by the previous phrase *blasphemy against.* Or else we may make a difference between blasphemy or reproachful words uttered *in regard* to the Holy Ghost, and blasphemy or evil speaking *against* the Holy Ghost; meaning by the latter phrase that blasphemy which the Holy Ghost does, in his infinite wisdom and justice, interpret and accept *against* itself. Of the sin *against* the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost is the sole Judge. It behooves blasphemous men to beware. The unfrequency with which such men ever come to God is sad proof that they do sin beyond all pardon. But it may be remarked, that inasmuch as the withdrawal of the Spirit will ever result in complete indifference, the very fear of a penitent man, that he has committed it, is full demonstration that he has not so done.

A sin unto death is spoken of by Saint John, for which no prayer is to be offered. That the sin mentioned by Saint John, is the same as our Lord here describes is evident from this, that our Lord declares that all other sins are pardonable; whereas the sin described by John is unpardonable. The same may perhaps be said of the sin of apostacy described by the apostle in the sixth chapter of Hebrews. It appears that there is but one unpardonable sin, and all these are *it. Neither in this...to come*—Neither in time nor in eternity. Mark iii, 29, expresses it: "Hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." It is difficult to say in what words the eternity of retribution could be more unequivocally expressed.

33–37. Our Lord in this passage first argues in regard to himself, that as *his fruit is good,* namely, his miracles of mercy, it follows that *he is good,* and not, as they have blasphemously charged, *on the side of evil.* He then retorts the same principle on themselves. They cannot do right and good so long as their hearts are evil. Nothing but the change of heart can produce the beneficent change of life.

33. *Either make the tree good*—That is, consider or hold the tree to be *good.* There cannot be a permanent contrariety between a moral agent's moral actions and his moral dispositions.

There is a sort of religious doctrine which teaches that men are not depraved in their *natures,* but only in their *actions.* Their nature back of their actions, it is claimed, is either innocent or it is neutral—neither good nor bad; and all of human depravity consists in the fact that *men do freely act bad, and always will do so.* Now, in opposition to this doctrine, our Lord teaches that there is in men a moral *nature* back of moral *action;* just as the tree is back of the fruit, just as the fountain is back of the stream, and just as the treasury full of good or evil is drawn from by the owner. It follows from this fact of man's fallen moral *nature,* that in order to be pure *in life* he must become *pure in heart.* There must be a change in *heart* in order that there should be a complete change in moral *action.* This does not

and [i]his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit.

34 O [j]generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? [k]for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A [l]good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

i Chap. 7. 17; Luke 6. 43, 44.—*j* Chap. 3. 7; 23. 33.—*k* Luke 6. 45.

l Psa. 37. 30, 31; Prov. 10. 20, 21; Eph. 4. 29; Col. 3. 16.

indeed deny that in individual acts (as in the fall of the angels or of man) their free will may choose wrong from a right nature. But in their permanent history the actions and the character will conform to each other.

Now *no nature can change itself.* If the nature is bad, the resulting action is bad; and if the action is bad, that bad action cannot react and make the nature good. So that no mere natural man can regenerate himself; that is, make his own nature good and pure. No filthy stream can make its fountain clean. No corrupt fruit can send back a stream of pure sap and regenerate the tree.

There must then be a divine aid. A gracious power must be able to enter our nature, and there, by power, make all right, or must communicate to the fallen nature the power to perform those conditions by which it may come right. Fatalism teaches that God by arbitrary power seizes some part of the human race, and absolutely makes them right. Our own Church teaches that God gives the power to all men by his Holy Spirit to do works meet for repentance; that grace used obtains further grace and power; so that by a gracious ability, and not by a natural ability, man may attain reformation, regeneration, and salvation. Yet that grace is not irresistible, nor necessarily unresisted, but accepted and used in action, with a full power of willing and acting otherwise instead.

Tree corrupt—Moral corruption of nature lies to a great degree in the state of the dispositions. It consists in a permanent temper and purpose to indulge the appetites, passions, and desires, with little or no regard to the divine law or the obligations of absolute right. Hence sin is either a state or an action which is *a transgression of the law.*

34. *O generation of vipers*—Our Lord in the last verse had used these doctrines to show that he was pure and good, because his actions were so. He now turns upon his opponents to convince them that *they* were the reverse in nature, and must be the reverse in action. The term *generation of vipers* indicates that depravity is inborn. As the viper's nature is derived by propagation from its original parents, so man's moral nature is derived from his progenitors. Divine grace is therefore necessary as that which by nature we cannot have; and a man must as a free agent *use* that grace which worketh within him both to will and to do. He must not receive the grace of God in vain. *How can ye*—They could not by mere nature, any more than an Ethiop can make himself white. Experience, Scripture, and reason teach this. God's grace, over and above nature, must give the power of change, and man must *use* it. *Abundance of the heart*—Abundance of the dispositions back of the will.

35. *Good treasure of the heart*—A most beautiful expression. The heart of *a good man* is a *treasure* of *good things.* Divine truths, blessed expressions, spiritual susceptibilities, holy emotions, dwell there richly, and abound. Like a wealthy banker, he has only to draw the precious *treasure* forth whenever occasion demands. *Evil treasure*—But the depraved man also has his treasury of *evil.* Hostile feelings against truth and goodness, skeptical arguments, malign emotions, purpose to prefer self-interest to right, hatred of God and religion, are all heaped together, and

36 But I say unto you, That [m] every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy [n] words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 ¶ [o] Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

m Eccl. 12. 14; Romans 2. 16; Eph. 5. 4, 6.
n Prov. 13. 3; James 2. 21, 25.

o Chap. 16. 1; Mark 8. 11; Luke 11. 16, 29; John 2. 18; 1 Cor. 1. 22.

ready to furnish of their store whenever the occasion demands.

36. *Every idle word*—Every worthless and unworthy word. The term *idle* means not merely unimportant or insignificant; but implies that there is some positive *evil* in the word, something on account of which it were better omitted.

It is not meant by this that all the prattle of the mother to her child, or of children among themselves, or all the pleasantries of social life, are in themselves evil; to be condemned because they do not tend to some special religious, pecuniary, or scientific end. It may indeed be said they do tend to a right and natural end. They give play to the pleasant and cheerful emotions, which are a part of rightful human happiness. They develop the faculties, and physiologically quicken the vital circulation, and are necessary to health both of body and of mind. Only beware that they are regulated by good sense, decency, and moderation; for, let it be remembered, they are all to pass God's *judgment* trial, to be *condemned* if *evil*, and thereby to condemn us.

37. *For by thy words thou shalt be justified*—This explains the preceding verse. By our words, however unimportant, we shall be *justified* or *condemned*, according as they are good or evil.

38. *Master, we would see a sign*—This asking for a *sign* seemed to be a standing demand, made at different times; by the scribes and Pharisees, as here; by the Pharisees with the Sadducees in chap. xvi, 1, 4; and by the people in Luke xi, 16, 29. See also John vi, 30; 1 Cor. i, 22. Our Lord uniformly not only refused compliance, but rebuked the request. From this, some skeptics have boldly inferred that our Lord could not furnish the *sign;* and that he really performed no miracles; since miracles are signs. To these cavils, perhaps answers will appear in the course of our remarks. But we may here remark that although a *miracle* is in a true sense a *sign*, yet there is a difference between a *miracle* and a *sign*. A *miracle* is a work going forth from our Lord's own power and act. A *sign* would be some divine *token*, given from *some other source*, as a confirmatory seal of his Messiahship. Now, as miracles going out from our Lord's power were proper and true manifestations of himself, it was upon proof of those that our Lord rightly held that he was to be received. He claimed to be accepted for what he himself was or did. What the Jews at this time sought, as appears from Luke, was a *sign from heaven;* and it is probable that they had in their minds what in Matt. xxiv, 30, is called "the *sign of the Son of man in heaven*;" that is, the glory of his approaching presence, preceding and *betokening* him. And this is explained in Daniel vii, 13, where the Son of man, with his glory in the heavens, is described, exhibiting the Lord in the same array of state, though not upon the same occasion. The Jews may have identified this glorious manifestation in the skies with the Messiah's first advent or coming. And as it was, possibly, this *sign of the Son of man*, or manifestation in the heavens, which the Jews now had in their thoughts in asking a *celestial sign*, so hence we have a good reason why our Lord does not grant their request. It was *out of the divine order;* inasmuch as that glorious appearing belonged to his *second coming* in power and judgment, and not to his first coming in humiliation and for salvation. But see notes on Matt. xvi, 1–4.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and [p]adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 [q]For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly: so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

p Isaiah 57. 3; chapter 16. 4; Mark 8. 38; John 4. 48.—q Jonah 1. 17.

39 *He answered*—Our Lord uniformly rebuked this demand for a *sign*. The temper of the demand itself was not to be indulged. Luke says that they made the request *tempting*, or making experiments upon *him*. They had a moblike desire to see splendid shows in the sky, not unlike the excitement of the populace for fireworks on some day of public celebration. And for a Messiah they wished a leader of the people who should gratify their riotous tastes and give them war and victory. This is the Messiah that gross human nature ever seeks. *Adulterous*—Compare note, chap. iv, 8, and introduction to chap. v, par. 4. Israel had once been, as it were, the true spouse and bride of Jehovah. Their true spouse now was Jesus, the Jehovah incarnate. But with a vile *spiritual adultery* they were forsaking him, and embracing in their hearts a false Messiah, the incarnation of their own riotous tastes and appetites. Hence they were not only an evil, but *adulterous* generation. *Sign of the prophet Jonas*—Our Lord, even in refusing a *sign*, gives a sign. His prophecy of his burial, after the manner of the swallowing of Jonah, was in itself a miracle of foreknowledge, and so a proof of his Messiahship.

40. *Three days*—His resurrection, connected with the diurnal revolution, would be an astronomical sign.

Our Saviour was not in the tomb three days and three entire nights, according to our modes of calculation. He expired on Friday afternoon and rose on Sunday morning. He was therefore entombed but the nights of Friday and Saturday. But the Jews reckoned the entire twenty-four hours in an unbroken piece, as a *night-and-day*. They counted the odd fragment of a day, in computation, as an entire night-and-day. Our Lord therefore was dead during three night-and-days.

The *sign* of the prophet Jonah was full of warning to the Jews. Jerusalem was the modern Nineveh; a living parallel to Jonah, greater than Jonah himself, was predicting its destruction; and the three night-and-days suggested that without repentance Jerusalem might meet the destruction that Nineveh, by repentance, escaped. Jonah prophesied a destruction in forty days; Jerusalem was destroyed after forty years. *Whale*—Rather, *sea monster*. But Dr. Thomson has the following remarks on this subject:

"The Bible says that the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up the prophet; but in Matthew it is called a *whale* by our Saviour. Now, if I am correctly informed, there are no whales in the Mediterranean. How do you explain this?

"Simply by the fact that the multiplication of ships in this sea, after the time of Jonah, frightened them out of it, as other causes have driven all lions out of Palestine, where they were once numerous. It is well known that some of the best fishing stations, even in the great oceans, have been abandoned by the whales because of the multitude of whalers that visited them. This sea would of course be forsaken. If you could stock it thoroughly with these monsters to-day, there would be none left a year hence. But up to the time of Jonah navigation was in its infancy, ships were few and small, and they kept mostly along the shores, leaving the interior undisturbed. Whales may therefore have been common in the Mediterranean. And there are instances on record of the appearance of huge marine creatures in this sea in ancient days. Some of these may have

41 [r]The men of Nineveh shall rise in the judgment with this generation, and [s]shall condemn it: [t]because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

42 [u]The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

43 [v]When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, [w]he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept and garnished.

r Luke 11. 32.—*s* Jer. 3. 11; Ezek. 16. 51, 52; Rom. 2. 27.—*t* Jonah 3. 5.

u 1 Kings 10. 1; 2 Chronicles 9. 1; Luke 11. 31
v Luke 11. 24.—*w* Job 1. 7; 1 Peter 5. 8.

been whales. The Hebrew word dâg, it is true, means simply *any* great fish; but nothing is gained by resorting to such a solution of the difficulty. Our Lord calls it a whale, and I am contented with his translation; and whale it was, not a shark or lamia, as some critics maintain. In a word, the whole affair was miraculous, and as such, is taken out of the category of difficulties."

Heart of the earth—As our Lord was not buried in the ground, but enclosed in a tomb of rock, some have understood by the phrase, *heart of the earth*, the place of departed spirits, to which our Lord at his death descended. But surely the *rock* is a part of the *earth*, as truly as the soil. The bosom of a rock is very expressively styled *the heart of the earth*.

41. *Shall condemn it*—The far superior example of the Ninevites shall reflect condemnation on the Jerusalemites. *They repented*—Though Jonah and Nineveh were a type of Jesus and Jerusalem, yet there is one point in which there is contrast rather than parallel. Nineveh repented on much less evidence. Jerusalem rejected the most beneficent miracles, persisted in sin, and died in impenitence. Thus did our Lord, in refusing a sign, give a sign and a witness.

42. *Queen of the south*—Of Sheba. Alford says: "Josephus calls her 'queen of Egypt and Ethiopia,' that is, Meroe, whose queens were usually called Candace. Abyssinian tradition, agreeing with this account, calls her Maqueda, and supposes her to have embraced the Jewish religion in Jerusalem. The Arabians, on the other hand, also claim her, calling her Balkis, which latter is probably nearer the truth, as Sheba is a tract in Arabia Felix, near the Red Sea, near the present Aden, abounding in spice, and gold, and precious stones."

43. *When the unclean spirit*—Our Lord draws a picture of the present apostate generation, (including the blaspheming Pharisees,) from the demoniac whom he had dispossessed before the commencement of this discourse, and whose case had given rise to it, (verse 22.) That generation had melted, and been transiently converted, under the preaching of John. They were precisely like the man he had just dispossessed. But how had the devil again possessed them! *Dry places*—Waterless, and therefore uninhabited deserts. *Walketh through dry places*—The demon, driven by divine power from the hearts of men, is pictured by our Lord as not going to hell directly, but as lingering in the unpeopled regions of the dry desert. *Seeking rest, and findeth none*—Because he pants for a residence in a human being.

44. *Return into my house*—The living human frame. *Empty, swept*—The terms still describe the man under the figure of a house ready for the demon to enter. He is *empty* of the blessed Spirit now grieved away; *swept* of all past holy influences and impressions. *Garnished*—Furnished; fitted up for his devilish tenant. The old word *garnish*,

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: [x]and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

46 ¶ While he yet talked to the people, [y]behold *his* mother and [z]his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50 For [a]whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

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x Heb. 6. 4; 10. 26; 2 Pet. 2. 20-22.—y Mark 3. 31; Luke 8. 19-21.—z Chap. 13. 55; Mark 6. 3; John 2. 12; 7. 3, 5; Acts 1. 14; 1 Cor. 9. 5; Gal. 1. 19.
a John 15. 14; Gal. 5. 6; 6. 15; Col. 3. 11; Heb. 2. 11.

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garniture, applies properly to all ornamental furnishing of a house or other object.

45. *Goeth...taketh...seven*—He will not re-enter weak and alone. He will take with him a strong reinforcement, so as not again to be ejected. *Worse than the first*—At least seven times worse. *This wicked generation*—From whom John's preaching briefly expelled the devil, but to whom eight devils have now returned.

§ 45. Attempt of the Mother and Brothers of Jesus to see him, 46–50.

46. *Mother . . . brethren*—Concerning the *brothers* of our Lord, see on chap. xiii, 55, also Matt. i, 25. *Stood without*—This was in Galilee, but in what house is not said. He was doubtless surrounded within doors by a dense congregation, probably in a synagogue. The purpose for which the mother and brothers of Jesus came to obtain an interview with him, is explained in the parallel passage of Mark iii, 31. The family are anxious for his safety or his health, and come to induce him to retire from his ministry to their home at Nazareth.

It seems that our Lord's *disciples* were *within* the house on this occasion, and his *brothers* were *without*. They could not then have been the same persons. James the Less, therefore, could not have been one of his *brothers*, for he was one of the *apostles*. Nor could James's brother Jude, otherwise called Thaddeus and Lebbeus. Nor could their brother Matthew, if he was a son of the same Alpheus or Cleophas. Hence the James and Judas, or Jude, among the disciples, who were sons of Cleophas, and cousins of Jesus, were not the same as the James and Judas mentioned chap. xiii, 55, who were literally brothers of Jesus. Jesus then had half-brothers, the sons of Mary, and the perpetual virginity of Mary is not to be believed.

Our Lord had brothers,(half brothers,) whose names were James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, and also sisters. He had cousins, whose names were James, Joses, Judas, and Matthew. See note on chap. xiii, 55.

49. *Disciples...my mother*—Our Lord here refused, or at least delayed to see his relatives, to teach an important lesson. Nothing more close than the connection of Christ and his believers. The tie of human relationship is physical and temporal; the tie to Christ is spiritual and eternal. And we see from this passage how absurd is the idea that Mary is our intercessor with Christ or God. The connection of any saint with Jesus by faith is greater than this tie of blood in itself is.

Our Lord speaks of mother, brother, and sister; but never of any human father.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, [a] and sat by the sea side.

2 [b] And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that [c] he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things un-

a Mark 4. 1.—*b* Luke 8. 4.

c Luke 5. 3.

CHAPTER XIII.

§ 49.—THE SEVEN PARABLES, 1–52.

As Matthew has in chapters eight and nine exhibited our Lord as a performer of mighty works, namely, ten miracles, so now he here presents him as a parabolist. SEVEN PARABLES—FOUR at the sea side, and THREE indoors—are grouped together.

1. *The same day*—The day of the transaction of the last chapter. He delivered the parables of this discourse, at evening took the boat and left; and exhausted by the overwhelming labours of the day, he sunk to slumbers, which were disturbed by the storm, which he stilled by miracle. *Went Jesus out of the house*—He had been invited to the house of a Pharisee, where he had much discourse. But very probably he went to his own house, from which he departed to the sea-shore, as here described, sat by the sea side first, probably, with his disciples; but the multitudes soon gathered around him and them. As appears by Mark iv, 1, with the notes, he was obliged to enter into the prepared boat and sit in the boat *in the sea.*

Jesus...sat—While he *sat*, we find by the next verse that the multitude *stood.* It was customary in our Saviour's day for the teacher to sit and the disciple to stand. Rabbi Gamaliel was probably the first who by arrangement took an elevated seat, and allowed his pupils to sit upon seats lower than his own platform. So Saul of Tarsus was brought up *at the feet* of Gamaliel. *By the sea side*—Of Lake Gennesaret. In regard to the beach of Lake Gennesaret consult our note on chap. iv, 13. Stanley says: "The lake is almost completely surrounded by mountains; but those mountains never come down into the water, but always have a beach of greater or less extent along the water's edge. It is on this smooth margin 'beside the Lake Gennesaret' that we must imagine Jesus 'standing,' then stepping into one of the two boats, and bidding Peter launch out into the deep. Luke v, 1, 2, 4. From the boat, that lay close by for the purpose, he addressed them his teaching in parables, and they stood on the beach."

2. *Stood on the shore*—Our Lord's pulpit was a ship; his Church the broad beach; and his congregation the standing multitude. It was an outdoor scene, beautiful for the thought to dwell upon. It may have been a quiet day in autumn, when the husbandman upon the distant hills was seen scattering the seed, from which our Lord drew his discourse.

3. *Spake many things...in parables*—Hence he spoke many parables upon this one occasion. This clearly demonstrates that the SEVEN PARABLES presented in this chapter were all delivered on the same day. It contradicts the notion of some that Matthew has here brought together a collection of such pieces uttered at different times. On the subject of parables we may here remark:

1. The PARABLE is a brief narrative of natural or earthly things, so constructed as to represent spiritual or heavenly things impressively to the mind. It has a foundation in the divine arrangements; for God has so constructed the natural world that the devout mind may look through nature up to nature's God. No compositions in human language so forcibly trace the analogies of nature and grace as the parables of our Lord.

2. This kind of composition has ever been used by the most thoughtful men of all ages, as the best method of drawing the heart of mankind from thoughts of mere earthly and material things to those of a spiritual or heavenly nature.

to them in parables, saying, [d] Behold a sower went forth to sow;

d Luke 8. 5.

The sacred parables serve as conductors from the world of matter to the world of thought. In the Old Testament are a few specimens, and among the later Jews, even before our Saviour, the wiser rabbis, taught by the sacred oracles, made use of this mode of instruction, and furnished many parables of no mean value, though none will compare in excellence with those of our Saviour. So the ancient Persians and the modern Germans have furnished many exquisite specimens of this kind of composition. Those of modern Europe have been all the more beautiful from the very reason that they are imbued with the Biblical spirit.

3. Our Lord did not condescend, like the fable writers of modern times, as well as of the heathen world, to form parables for the illustration of principles of mere earthly morality. He never forgets that his theme is eternity, and his object the soul of man. Nor does he ever violate the laws of nature, by any speaking beasts or birds, or any monstrous fabrications of fancy. His parables are all true in the general. They are things which often happen. They are in the ordinary course of nature.

4. The sacred parable was a wonderful vehicle of truth to serve three distinct purposes, namely: to *reveal*, to *conceal*, and to *perpetuate*. It *revealed* the sacred truth by the striking power of analogy and illustration. It *concealed* the truth from him who had not by proper sympathy or previous instruction the true key to its hidden meaning. To such a one it was a riddle or a tale. And so our Lord could give to his disciples in this method the deepest secrets of his kingdom for ages, while the caviller, who would have abused the truth, heard without understanding. See verse 11. But the truth thus embodied in narrative was, as it were, materialized, and made fit for *perpetuation*. It had a form and body to it, by which it could be preserved in tangible shape for future ages.

These considerations will serve to show the great wisdom of our Lord in enshrining so much of doctrinal truth in vehicles at once so attractive and so imperishable.

First Parable—*The Sower*, 3–23.

That this parable of the sower was the first of our Lord's parables is probable from several reasons. It was so new a mode of instruction that the disciples, in verse tenth, inquired why he used it, and the reason that he gave them was, that truth might be revealed to them and hidden from others.

3. *Behold*—The animated introduction gives plausibility to the view that our Lord pointed to some distant sower in sight scattering his seed. *A sower went forth*—The *sower* is the preacher, the seed is the word of truth, the soil is the receptive attention of the people. *Went forth*—That is, the preacher does not wait for the people to come to him.

How truly our Lord drew his images from the scenery around him, Dr. Thomson thus illustrates:

"Behold a sower *went forth* to sow. There is a nice and close adherence to actual life in this form of expression. The expression implies that the sower, in the days of our Saviour, lived in a hamlet, or village, as all these farmers now do; that he did not sow near his own house or in a garden fenced or walled. Now here we have the whole within a dozen rods of us. Our horses are actually trampling down some seeds which have fallen by this wayside, and larks and sparrows are busy picking them up. That man with his mattock is digging up places where the rock is too near the surface for the plough, and much that is sown there will wither away, because it has no deepness of earth. And not a few seeds have fallen among this *bellan*, and will be effectually choked by these most tangled of thorn bushes. But a large portion after all falls into really good ground, and four months hence will exhibit every variety of crop, up to the richest and heaviest that ever rejoices the heart even of an American farmer."

4 And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon [e]stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the [f]sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

8 But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some [g]a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

e Ezek. 11. 19; 36. 26; Amos 6. 12.

f James 1. 11; Rev. 7. 16.—*g* Gen. 26. 12.

Sceptical writers have maintained that the soil of Palestine is so poor as to contradict the character for fertility ascribed to it in the Old Testament. Their error may be shown from the following considerations: 1. No such superiority of soil over other lands of the earth is ascribed to Palestine in Scripture as these objectors imagine. Thus the strongest Scripture phrase, "a land flowing with milk and honey," is but a picturesque declaration that herds and bees should be an abundant natural product, which is eminently the fact. 2. Every land, even fertile Sicily has its barren spots. 3. Ages of oppression and total neglect have produced barrenness where most luxuriant harvests might have been gathered. With due culture the plains of Esdraelon might be made the granary of the East. 4. The very rocks of Palestine, being of limestone, are easily crumbled, and are thereby made a source of fertility. The hills afford terraces for the vines which under proper culture would cover them. The rich olive flourishes best in this rocky soil.

4. *Fell by the wayside*—Dropped in the hard path and so lay on the surface, a ready food for birds. "The ordinary roads or paths in the East lead often along the edge of the fields, which are unenclosed. Hence, as the sower scatters his seed, some of it is liable to fall beyond the ploughed portion, on the hard, beaten ground which forms the wayside."—*Prof. Hackett.*

Devoured them up—In the old English, the phrase "devoured them up" was intensive and energetic.

5. *Stony places*—Rocky places. These were not spots infested with numerous stones, but thin layers of soil over a surface of rock. Stanley vividly describes "the long sheets of bare rock laid like flagstones side by side along the soil." He quotes Keith as saying: "The rounded and rocky hills of Judea swell out in empty, unattractive, and even repulsive barrenness." *Sprung up*—There being no chance for a root to penetrate downwards, the sap struck up and produced a sudden but feeble stock. During the rainy season in Palestine this is a rapid process.

6. *Sun was up*—The hot Oriental sun would soon wither the rapid and tender stock.

7. *Some fell among thorns*—Briers and brambles in hot countries have a quick and plentiful overgrowth. They crowd and choke every other form of vegetation. "Every one who has been in Palestine must have been struck with the number of thorny shrubs and plants that abound there. The traveller finds them in his path, go where he may. Many of them are small, but some grow as high as a man's head. The Rabbinical writers say that there are no less than twenty-two words in the Hebrew Bible denoting thorny and prickly plants. The prevalence of such shrubs, say agriculturists, shows a luxuriant soil If proper care be not taken they soon get the upper hand, and spread in every direction. 'I went by the field of the slothful; and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof.' Prov. xxiv, 30–31."—*Prof. Hackett.*

9 [h] Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because [i] it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 [k] For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: [l] because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, [m] By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears [n] are

h Chapter 11. 15; Mark 4. 9.—*i* Chapter 11. 25; 16. 17; Mark 4. 11; 1 Corinthians 2. 10; 1 John 2. 27.—*k* Chapter 25. 29; Mark 4. 25; Luke 8. 18; 19. 26.

l Deut. 29. 3, 4; Isa. 42. 18, 20; Jer. 5. 21; Ezek. 12. 2; 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.—*m* Isa. 6. 9; Ezek. 12. 2; Mark 4. 12; Luke 8. 10; John 12. 40; Acts 28. 26; Rom. 11. 8; 2 Cor. 3. 14.—*n* Heb. 5. 11.

9. *Ears to hear*—Who hath faculties, let him remember that he is responsible for their use. Whoever has powers of attention, let him now exert them; lessons most important for him to hear will now be presented.

10. *Why speakest thou...in parables*—It was (evidently from this question) a *new form* of our Lord's teaching. Why was it now so plentifully adopted as to furnish seven in a single discourse? *Unto them*—That is, to the people. This included no doubt the cavillers who had abused his more literal teaching.

11. *Given unto you to know the mysteries*—Mysteries to others but plain truths to you, because I furnish you the key. The parabolic form veils the truth from them, but unveils the truth to you. See introductory note of the chapter. *The kingdom of heaven*—It is to be noted that these seven parables all have for their subject the kingdom of God: its planting principles, developments, and final victory.

12. *Whosoever hath*—That is, hath a willing and receptive disposition and purpose. *Shall be given*—Namely, the truth which he is willing to receive. *Hath not*—Hath not the receptivity. *That he hath*—The disciples had a receptive disposition, and so there was given to them the lesson and its explanation, the parable and its doctrine. The Jewish cavillers had not the receptive willingness, and so even that which they had was taken from them, namely, the opportunity of learning. It was either withheld, or wrapped in unexpressed enigmas. Abuse of privileges justly produces their withdrawment.

It is curiously true of any parable that *to him that hath*, namely, the key, *to him shall be given*, namely, the meaning. And the whole Gospel is a parable to him whose heart has not the key.

13. *Therefore*—In order to take from them that which they have, namely, the means of understanding my doctrines merely to abuse them. *In parables*—Which will cover from their knowledge truths which will do them no good, but with which they will do harm. *Because they seeing see not*—Because that when the parable conceals the real meaning they see and hear the narrative, but perceive not the doctrine it embodies.

14. *Esaias.* (Isaiah vi, 9–10.) *Is fulfilled*—It was a generic description of character fulfilled equally truly by the Jew of the days of Isaiah, and the Jew of the days of Jesus. By the faculty of *hearing ye shall hear* the parable, but *shall not understand* its truth. *Shall see* the narrative of the parable, but shall not perceive its hidden doctrine

15. *For this people's heart is waxed*

dull of hearing, and their [o]eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But [p]blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, [q]That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

18 ¶ [r]Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

o Isa. 29. 10, 12; 44. 20; 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11.
p Chap. 16. 17; Luke 10. 23, 24; John 20. 29.
q Hebrews 11. 13; 1 Peter 1. 10, 11.
r Mark 4. 14; Luke 8. 11.

gross—The reason is now given why those withholdings of truth are inflicted. The minds of the people had grown too gross to receive it. For instance, had the parable of the mustard seed been explained to the Pharisees as indicating that the Gospel would yet fill the earth, it would only have excited their additional hostility, and hastened their purpose of accusing him as intending to subvert the existing government. As their purpose had become too fixed, and their hearts too hard to enter into the spirit and plan of the kingdom of God, its teachings must remain mysteries to them. *Dull of hearing*—That is, of hearing what was most deeply essential to their good. *Their eyes they have closed*—It is they who have done it. Their blindness is wilful. They close their own eyes to the beauty of the Gospel, and therefore its real principles must be kept from them. *I should heal them*—As I would gladly do, if they would but allow it to be done.

It is the law of God's spiritual kingdom, that resistance to truth hardens the heart. To brace their minds against the truth and to defend themselves in opposition to it, they arm themselves with countless falsehoods. Their minds thereby get into that state that it benefits them not; nay, even damages and condemns them. It may be then even a mercy to withhold it from them. They may use it to evil purposes, and it may bring them into greater sin. Or they may have so insulted it that they have by their own heinous guilt rendered themselves, like the damned in hell, unworthy of it.

16. *Blessed are your eyes*—You have loved the teacher and accepted the truth. *They see*—Your blessed eyes see not only the outside shell of truth, but the inner kernel. *They hear*—Not only the literal narrative of the parable, but its secret meaning. And that hidden meaning is the very substance of divine wisdom. It reveals the truths of the Messiah's kingdom of grace on earth and of glory in heaven. It opens the truths of the Old Testament to the mind, and explains the mysteries dimly seen by the ancient prophets.

17. *Many prophets and righteous men*—The times of the Messiah, his character and kingdom, were all a matter of most profound interest to the Old Testament saints. All these were now being revealed to the humble and obedient apostles of our Lord. The men of old saw them only by faith in types, shadows, and dim intimations; the Jews rejected, but the simple disciples received them in blessed faith.

18. *Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower*—It was important for the disciples and for us, that the first and some others of the parables should be explained, in order to furnish the key, not only to them but to other parables.

The parable of the sower divides the hearers of the Gospel into four classes. 1. The mere unintelligent hearer, who hears but receives not. 2. The shallow hearer, whose emotions are superficially touched, but whose heart is still hard 3. The hearer whose heart is fully right,

19 When any one heareth the word [s] of the kingdom, [t] and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

20 But he that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon [u] with joy receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by [v] he is offended.

22 [w] He also that receiveth seed [x] among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

s Chap. 4. 23.—*t* John 3. 19, 20; 8. 43; 18. 38; Acts 17. 32.—*u* Isa. 58. 2; Ezek. 33. 31, 32; John 5. 35.

v Chap. 11. 6; 2 Tim. 1. 15.—*w* Chap. 19. 23; Mark 10. 23; Luke 18. 24; 1 Tim. 6. 9; 2 Tim. 4. 10. *x* Jer. 4. 3.

but is at last conquered by outer temptation. 4. The persevering and fruitful receiver of the word. Of the four classes, alas! only one can be saved.

19. *Heareth . . . and understandeth it not*—So the Jewish outsider heard the parable, but it was a mere tale to him. He penetrated not the interior meaning and power. And it is wonderful how little the careless hearer of the Gospel in a Christian land, who attends church, as a form, from Sabbath to Sabbath, really understands the Gospel. When he afterwards becomes convicted of sin, the simplest truths have to be repeated and explained, which he has heard with his ear a hundred times. The truth has indeed fallen upon his ear like seed on the solid surface of a beaten path; it has lain ready for the devil to carry off and leave not a trace behind.

20. *Stony places*—Rocky surfaces covered with thin soil. There is many a soul with a surface soft and yielding, but a nature truly hard at bottom. In such the shallow emotions are quickly stirred, but their deeper nature remains untouched. The Jews were full of a joyous excitement at John's first preaching the Messiah. But it was a superficial arousement: the heart was not truly converted. When the Messiah's true nature was disclosed, they soon showed that the subsoil was unchanged rock. Such prove apparent apostates; but they are not really such. They never had the reality to apostatize from.

21. *Not root . . . dureth for a while*—His religion is without root, and so is only the surface-stirring of natural emotions. When the momentary cause or occasion disappears, he loses both the feeling and the appearance. So the convert who, in a revival, acts upon mere outside excitement, is among the first to be missing when the special movement is past. *Tribulation or persecution*—If a superficial professor does not drop off from mere cessation of excitement, a little trouble, a little opposition or contempt of the world, brushes him off. There may be much lukewarmness and much inconsistency in the Church, but perhaps less permanent hypocrisy than many suppose. *Offended*—Ensnared and led into evil.

22. *Among thorns*—This is a sad case. The seed is good, the soil is good, the growth is genuine, internally everything is right. But while all is going well within, there are difficulties without, which in time prove fatal. What are those enemies to salvation without? They are the *care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches.* Adversities and prosperities may both be enemies to our soul. Some become soured by trouble, and their time is so engrossed, that they have no heart, no room for the service of God. Others become wealthy and proud; too fine and too fashionable to be pious. *Becometh unfruitful*—There once was fruit. But, alas! fruit and blossom, leaf and stock become choked and disappear.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it;* which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, [y] The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares

y Mark 4. 30; Luke 13. 18, 20.

This is genuine apostacy. It is the loss of real life and fruitfulness once existing. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall; and let no false theology induce him to think most presumptously, "*once in grace always in grace.*"

23. *Received...heareth...understandeth...beareth fruit*—Here is the believer, the fruit bearer, the perseverer. *Good ground*—But is the *ground* of any human heart *good* antecedent to regeneration? Some say not; and on this ground some creeds affirm that regeneration must even precede justifying or saving faith. But certainly no man is regenerated, that is, born again, unless he is first forgiven. To be *born again* is to be made a *child* of God; and to be a child of God is impossible until after a man is forgiven. That is, *regeneration* is consequent upon forgiveness or justification.

And yet it is true that the ground of the human heart is never spiritually good by nature. It may be good in the sense that, having voluntarily complied with the influence of the Holy Spirit it has become ready to receive the offered word, and so is relatively *good.* That Spirit precedes the word and prepares the consenting heart. The good soil, therefore, for receiving the word may be called a sort of amalgam, or uniting of the Holy Spirit and the consenting will. When these combine, the word may be fully received and accepted; the man yields his full faith, and pardon, justification, regeneration, sanctification, fruit-bearing, and, upon perseverance, eternal life ensue. Happy are those eyes and those ears and those hearts that receive all this.

Hundredfold—The soil of Palestine could produce at this rate, but not ordinarily To produce a hundred from one is a rich increase; but how rich the increase of every Christian who converts a hundred sinners!

SECOND PARABLE—*The Wheat and Tares,* 24–30.

This parable explains the entire structure of the system of probation under the Christian dispensation, or perhaps through all time. As the former parable describes the planting of the dispensation, so this describes its struggle with evil in the world until the judgment day. It is not so much a parable of the *Church* as of the *world and the Church under the Messiah;* for *the field is the world.* While probation lasts, wickedness is permitted to develop itself. There is to be no organic destruction of wicked men by God or angels; there must be no persecuting them to destruction by the servants of God; they must be allowed to live and work their destiny. Nor will they be forcibly changed or irresistibly regenerated in their nature.

To do either of these things would violate the very fundamental principles of probation. But at the end of the world the final separation of good and evil will take place, by the command of Christ, and the execution thereof by angels. The parable is therefore a brief, simple moral history of the world.

24. *The kingdom of heaven*—The system of human probation or the divine government. *Likened unto a man*—Not likened to the *man alone,* but to this whole parabolic transaction which begins with the *man.* The *man* represents the Divine Ruler of the universe. *Sowed good seed*—This properly goes back to the period of the Creation, when God planted man pure upon the field of the world.

25. *While men slept*—While the providence of God and human affairs

among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 [z]So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, [a]Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye

[z] 1 Cor. 3. 5. 9: 12. 28. 29: Eph. 4. 11. 12.——[a] Luke 9. 49. 54.

were going quietly on, *his enemy*, the devil, *sowed tares*. The devil is here said to *sow* wicked men, just as the wicked are called children of the devil, not because he *creates* or *procreates* them, but because their moral nature as inners was brought about by his agency. As men, God is their father; as sinners, they are the children of the devil.

"The *tare* abounds all over the East, and is a great nuisance to the farmer. It resembles the American *cheat*, but the *head* does not droop like cheat, nor does it branch out like oats. The grain, also, is smaller, and is arranged along the upper part of the stalk, which stands perfectly erect. The *taste* is bitter, and when eaten separately, or even when diffused in ordinary bread, it causes dizziness, and often acts as a violent emetic. Barn-door fowls also become dizzy from eating it. In short, it is a strong soporific poison, and must be carefully winnowed, and picked out of the wheat, grain by grain, before grinding, or the flour is not healthy."—*Dr. Thomson.*

27. *Servants of the householder*—Some understand by the servants here the ministers and guardians of the Church. But the field is not the *Church*, but the *world*, or the divine government or kingdom. These servants do not stand for any class of persons. But the false notion that the wicked should be destroyed from the earth is introduced by simply putting it dramatically into the mouths of the servants of the householder. That the servants do not represent any particular class of persons is shown by the fact that they are unmentioned in our Lord's explanation of the parable which follows

28. *Wilt thou...we go and gather them up*—Ought not the wicked to be destroyed from the face of the earth? Why are they permitted to exist? Does it not almost make atheists of us to see how God permits them to live and prosper? No; for the permission is for them to live to develope; and so God will not eradicate them out of the earth, and good men must not expect to be able to persecute them to destruction.

Eastern farmers maintain that *tares* are *degenerate wheat*, affirming that a field is frequently sown with wheat and the seed comes up tares. Dr. Thomson explains this singular fact thus:

"I suppose that several separate causes conspire to bring about the result. First, very wet weather in winter *drowns* and kills *wheat*, while it is the most favourable of all weather for *tares*. In a good season the wheat overgrows and chokes the tares, but in a wet one the reverse is true. The farmers all admit this, but still they ask, Whence the *seed* of the tares? we sowed 'good seed.' To this it may be answered: The tare is a very light grain, easily blown about by the wind; that a thousand little birds are ever carrying and dropping it over the fields; that myriads of ants are dragging it in all directions; that moles, and mice, and goats, and sheep, and nearly every other animal, are aiding in this work of dispersion; that much of the tares *shell out* in handling the grain in the field; that a large part of them is thrown out by the wind at the threshing-floor, which is always in the open country; that the heavy rains, which often deluge the country in autumn, carry down to the lower

root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let [b]both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but [c]gather the wheat into my barn.

31 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, [d]The kingdom of heaven is like to a

b Malachi 3. 18; 1 Corinthians 4. 5.
c Chapter 3. 12.

d Isaiah 2. 2, 3; Micah 4. 1; Mark 4. 30, &c.; Luke 13. 18, 19.

levels this outcast *zowan* (tares) and sow them there; *and these are precisely the spots where the transmutation is said to occur.* It is my belief that in these and in similar ways the *tares* are *actually sown*, without the intervention of an enemy, and their presence is accounted for without having recourse to this incredible doctrine of *transmutation.*"

Root up also the wheat—Commentators sometimes understand by this that we are forbidden to persecute heretics in the Church, for we may be mistaken in men's characters and put innocent men to death. Now, first, this is a poor reason against persecution. Second, it is not the Church but the world which is symbolized by the field. Third, by this mode of interpretation the servants are both men and a part of the wheat at the same moment. And, fourth, the reason supposed is not the reason expressed in the text. The reason in the text is not that they might *mistake* wheat for tares, and so pull it up. It is that, in the *violence* of the work, both would be pulled up, and the field be destroyed. The destruction of probationary sinners would be the destruction of the probationary system.

It is no doubt true that the tares when first springing up strongly resemble the wheat, so as to be easily mistaken for it; but not after a little growth. Dr. Thomson expresses the real point, when he says: "Very commonly the roots of the two are so intertwined that *it is impossible to separate them without plucking up both.* Both, *therefore*, must be left to grow together until the time of harvest."

30. *Let both grow together until the harvest*—Let the probationary state remain until the judgment day. Then shall the final separation of the good and the evil take place. The evil shall be sent to hell, and the righteous to heaven. *Gather ye...first the tares...gather the wheat*—Upon the same gathering both tares and wheat are sent each to their own place. We remark here:

1. We have here a very clear contradiction of the millenarian theory that there are two resurrections, one of the righteous, another of the wicked, a thousand years apart.

2. We have also a very express condemnation of the doctrine that God will first destroy the wicked, and allow the saints to reign on earth a thousand years before the final judgment. The wicked and the righteous will both continue undestroyed during the time of probation. This belongs to the very nature of the probation.

3. Nor does this parable contradict the doctrine that men will be generally converted for ages before the judgment. It is destruction, not conversion, that the parable intends to deny. Men will be *permitted* to be wicked even in the millennium. They will be of the same depraved nature as now. Only the main mass will be saints by conversion and sanctification.

4. Let us from this parable understand the divine government, and never wonder at the sparing or even the prosperity of the wicked. This is the season of probation, but the day of judgment will show a different state of things. Verily there is a just God over all.

THIRD PARABLE—*The Mustard Seed*, 31–32.

31. *Another parable*—The parable of *the mustard seed* is a sort of supplement to the parable of the tares and wheat. It supplies what that had omitted, namely, the fact that while the wicked would not be destroyed, yet the king

grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is [e] the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

[e] Psalm 72. 16, 19; Zechariah 4. 10.

dom of God should be progressive and triumphant on the earth. Though there should be no millennium by the destruction of the wicked, yet there may be one by the growth of the cause of righteousness. The *kingdom of heaven* is in this parable, as in the last, the *divine administration*, and the *field* is again the *world*. The Church is here not the *wheat*, but the *mustard seed*, sown by the same divine hand as the wheat. If it was discouraging to the disciples to learn that the wicked would not be destroyed, yet it was cheering to know that righteousness, however small its beginning, would triumph on the earth.

Like to a grain of mustard seed—The plant here spoken of was probably the "Khardal" or Turkish mustard, (botanically the Salvadora Persica,) which from a very small seed grows to a tree with a wooden fibre, and to such a size that it can be climbed by a man; and so it truly becometh a tree. It produces numerous branches and leaves, among which birds may and do take shelter, and build their nests. Such is the statement of Dr. Royle, Art. Sinapi, Kitto's Encyc. Prof. Hackett, after long and doubtful search, found on the plains of Akka, on the way to Carmel, a little forest of mustard trees which he thus interestingly describes: "It was then in blossom, full grown, in some cases six, seven, and nine feet high, with a stem or trunk an inch or more in thickness, throwing out branches on every side. I was now satisfied in part. I felt that such a plant might well be called a tree, and, in comparison with the seed producing it, a great tree. But still the branches, or stems of the branches, were not very large, or, apparently, very strong. Can the birds, I said to myself, rest upon them? Are they not too slight and flexible? Will they not bend or break beneath the superadded weight? At that very instant, as I stood and revolved the thought, lo! one of the fowls of heaven stopped in its flight through the air, alighted down on one of the branches, which hardly moved beneath the shock, and then began, perched there before my eyes, to warble forth a strain of the richest music. All my doubts were now charmed away. I was delighted at the incident. It seemed to me at the moment as if I enjoyed enough to repay me for all the trouble of the whole journey."

32. *Least of all seeds*—The point of the parable is to exhibit the contrast between the smallness of the Gospel beginnings and the greatness of the result. The mustard was the least of seeds that produced the genuine *tree*. *Greatest among herbs*—Though a tree in size, it was a herb by proper classification. *Birds of the air*—This is added to complete the image of a goodly tree; but it is also a sweet illustration of the character of the Church, as a refuge and a protection for the souls that resort to her shadow. See Ezek. xvii, 23: "Under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing."

This parabolic image of the growth of the kingdom of Christ is beautifully parallel to many passages in the Old Testament, where the rise and expansion of kingdoms are compared to the growth of a stately tree. (Dan. iv, 10–12; Ezek. xxxi, 3–9.) It is also strongly accordant with the image in Daniel ii, 34, 35, of the kingdom of God, which at first was a small stone, but finally became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. And this last image describes the growth of the kingdom, as being completely universal, more explicitly even than our Lord's simile here of the mustard spreading its branches.

33 ¶ [f]Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three [1]measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 [g]All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, [h]I will open my mouth in parables; [i]I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

f Luke 13. 20, &c.—1 Gr. *saton*, a measure containing nearly a peck and a half.

g Mark 4. 33, 34.—*h* Psa. 78. 2.—*i* Rom. 16. 25, 26; 1 Cor. 2. 7; Eph. 3. 9; Col. 1. 26.

FOURTH PARABLE.—*The Leaven in the Meal*, 33.

33. *The kingdom of heaven*—The divine dispensation of the Gospel. In this parable the *woman* is the symbol of the divine agency, the *meal* is the human heart, the *leaven* is the Gospel. As *leaven* diffuses itself through the *meal* until the whole *lump is leavened*, so the grace of God and the power of the Gospel are a diffusive power, which impregnates the whole heart and transforms its character. As the parable of the mustard tree describes the external, so this parable describes the internal prevalence of the Gospel power. It describes the internal influence not upon the individual alone, but upon the masses of humanity. *Three measures of meal*—A *measure* was the third part of an ephah, and these three were the usual quantity for a baking. Gen. xviii, 6; Judges vi, 19; 1 Sam. i, 24. *Whole was leavened*—The grace of God in the heart, when properly received and cultivated, assimilates the whole character to its blessed nature.

34. *All these things*—All these principles or truths. *Without a parable spake he not*—There was no principle introduced which he did not illustrate by this newly commenced form of teaching.

35. *Might be fulfilled...by the prophet*—Psa. lxxviii. That psalm is ascribed to Asaph, but the sentiment here expressed was fulfilled or exemplified by this mode of our Lord's teachings. *Kept secret*—Or unrevealed by God. *From the foundation of the world*—That is, from the commencement of the creation, or the beginning of sublunary time.

36. *Went into the house*—After dismissing his sea shore congregation he returned to his usual residence in Capernaum. *Declare*—Explain or solve. Thus was it given to the disciples to know these *mysteries* of the planting, the development, the growth, the prevalence, and the final issue of the Gospel kingdom. The unbelieving opponents of our Lord would have reviled, denied, perverted, and abused this; and so, being unfit to receive them, these saving mysteries were forever hidden from their eyes. Thus were these things most justly hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. And this was not because God had arbitrarily excluded them from salvation, but because they do most freely exclude themselves. They all might, like the disciples, have received the truth and been redeemed by the blessed Saviour.

SOLUTION OF THE PARABLE OF THE TARES AND THE WHEAT, 37–43.

37. *He that soweth...the Son of man*—The *sower* is the Redeemer, the *field* is not the Church, but the world; the *good seed* are the Christians; the *tares* are the wicked, their sower is Satan. At the end of the world the angels shall

38 [j]The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are [k]the children of the wicked *one;*

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; [l]the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, [m]and they shall gather out of his kingdom all [2]things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 [n]And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: [o]there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 [p]Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. [q]Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

44 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and [r]selleth all that he hath, and [s]buyeth that field.

j Chap. 24. 14; 28. 19; Mark 16. 15; Luke 24. 47; Rom. 10. 18; Col. 1. 6.—*k* Gen. 3. 15; John 8. 44; Acts 13. 10; 1 John 3. 8.—*l* Joel 3. 13; Rev. 14. 15.—*m* Chap. 18. 7; 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

2 Or, *scandals.*—*n* Chap. 3. 12; Rev. 19. 20 20. 10.—*o* Chap. 8. 12; verse 50.—*p* Dan. 12. 3 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43, 58.—*q* Verse 9.—*r* Phil. 3. 7, 8. *s* Isa. 55. 1; Rev. 3. 18.

gather out the harvest of wicked men to cast them into the blaze of retribution.

40. *End of this world*—The end of probationary time. While that lasts the good and evil mingle together. Then comes the world of retribution, in which the good and evil are parted into separate states of reward.

41. *All things that offend*—All evil things and all that seduce to evil. *Them which do iniquity*—Evil persons.

42. *Furnace of fire*—Fire is the most usual form under which penal retribution is described in the New Testament. The fires of the valley of Hinnom were to the Jews the emblem of future penalty. Hence the burning flame is the ordinary symbol of hell. And if there be not in the world of retribution a real material fire, yet what fire is to the body that the element of hell will doubtless be to the soul and to the immortal resurrection body.

43. *Righteous...as the sun*—A most resplendent image of the glorified saints in heaven. The Greek verb is very expressive—*shine out*—as if during their sojourn in this world they were obscured by a cloud. Heaven is the firmament in which every luminary is a sun.

FIFTH PARABLE.—*The Hid Treasure,* 44.

44. *Again*—The following three parables were not spoken, like the previous ones, to the multitude by the sea side, but privately to the disciples in the house. They mainly illustrate the same subject, and affirm the same views as the previous parables. The kingdom of God, as bringing an invaluable Gospel, and as implying a time of probation, is set forth in brief similes. *Treasure hid in a field*—Divine truth is a *treasure* from its value; it is *hid* because men's eyes are apt to be morally blind to its reality. But the true seeker of it is ready to give everything for it. And as the former parables were delivered to the multitudes, and then explained to the disciples alone, there may be an allusion to the fact that the deeper instructions of Christ are reserved from the incapable multitude and delivered to his disciples.

"It is not difficult to account for this *hid treasure.* This country has always been subject to revolutions, invasions, and calamities of various kinds, and hence a feeling of insecurity hovers over the land like a dismal spectre. The government robs, and so do the nobility and clergy; Arabs rush in from the

desert and plunder; warriors and conquerors from every part of the world sweep over the land, carrying everything away that falls into their hands. Then there are and always have been intestine commotions and wars, such as laid Lebanon in ruins in 1841, and again in 1845. At such times multitudes bury their gold and jewels, and in many cases the owner is killed, and no one knows where the treasure was concealed. Then again this country has ever been subject to earthquakes, which bury everything beneath her ruined cities. On the first day of 1837, Safed was thus dashed to the ground in a moment, house upon house down the steep mountain side, and many entire families were cut off. Some were known to have money, and it was a shocking spectacle to see hardened wretches prowling about under the ruins, amid putrifying carcasses, in search of these treasures."—*Dr. Thomson.*

It is thus because the state of society is insecure, and no safe public depositories exist, that money is often hid by the owner in the earth. By the Jewish law, and partly by Roman law, the owner of the ground was owner of its concealed treasure. In the parable the finder uses his knowledge of the fact to guide himself in the bargain, as men use professional knowledge for their own profit. He pays the owner all the field is worth to his ignorance. Was the purchaser bound or not to inform the owner of the fact of the concealed treasure?

The finder purchases not the treasure alone, but the field that holds the treasure. So good men embrace not naked truth alone, but the Bible and the Church, which possess that truth. He who loves religion loves the unity, peace, and prosperity of the Church of God, with her blessed Gospel, her divine law, and her sanctifying ordinances.

The following incident from Dr. Thomson forcibly illustrates this parable:

"About three years ago some workmen, digging over the ground of this garden on our left, found several copper pots, which contained a large quantity of ancient gold coin. The poor fellows concealed the discovery with the greatest care; but they were wild with excitement, and besides, there were too many of them to keep such a secret. The governor of the city heard of it, apprehended all who had not fled, and compelled them to disgorge. He recovered two of the pots, placed them beside him, and required them to refill them with coin. In this way he obtained between two and three thousand; but it is certain that there remain hundreds, if not thousands, which he could not get. The French consul told me that the whole number was over eight thousand. They are all coins of Alexander and his father Philip, of the most pure gold, each one worth a little more than an English sovereign. As there is no mixture of coins later than Alexander, the deposit must have been made during his reign, or immediately after. I suspect it was royal treasure, which one of Alexander's officers concealed when he heard of his unexpected death in Babylon, intending to appropriate it to himself, but being apprehended, slain, or driven away by some of the revolutions which followed that event, the coin remained where he had hid it."

Sixth Parable.—*The Goodly Pearl*, 45, 46.

As the former parable illustrates the hidden character of divine truth, so this illustrates its unsurpassed beauty and value. The *pearl* is the Gospel. The *merchant* is the true inquirer. As for that pearl he gives *all he has*, so the Gospel has that excellence that we wisely surrender all to obtain it.

45. *A merchantman seeking goodly pearls*—The Oriental profession of the travelling jeweller still exists. He deals in precious stones and pearls. He may find one which, if bought with all his present stock, may make his fortune by being sold at an exorbitant price to some extravagant prince for a crown-jewel.

The *pearl* is selected as a beautiful image of divine truth. It strikes the eye of the beholder with admiration for its loveliness and value. The pearl is a white, hard, smooth, shining piece of

45 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who, when he had found [t] one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and [u] gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come

[t] Prov. 2. 4; 3. 14. 15; 8. 10, 19.—[u] Chap. 22. 10.

substance, usually rather globular, found in a shell fish of the oyster kind. Its shell is called *mother of pearl.* The pearl is found in the Persian seas, and in many parts of the ocean which washes the shores of Arabia, and the continent and isles of Asia. It is brought up from the marine depths by professional divers. Pearls are of different sizes and colours. Some have been found more than an inch in length, the larger ones approaching the figure of a pear. They are valued according to their size, their roundness, and their purity or lustre. The Orientals have been more attracted by the beauty of the pearl even than the brilliancy of the diamond. A string of the largest pearls, both in extreme antiquity and at the present day, is an indispensable part of the decoration of an Eastern monarch. References to the pearl occur in different parts of the Scripture. Matt. vii, 6; 1 Tim. ii, 9; Rev. xvii, 4. In Rev. xxi, 21, the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem were "twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl."

Seeking goodly pearls—There are large masses of mankind who are like the swine, to whose taste the goodly pearl is not to be compared with their husks. This man is one whom husks will not satisfy; he looks for pearls.

46. *Sold all*—For if religion be worth anything, it is worth everything. If it require a man on conversion to make restitution of thousands of dollars, he obtains salvation cheaply. *Bought it*—The grace of God is not indeed *bought* with money. The faith of the heart is what alone procures it. But when that faith is in the heart, the heart delights to *give* for the Gospel. To obtain that faith often requires large sacrifices, especially of the fruits and enjoyments of sin. These sacrifices the man who knows the value of the goodly pearl will joyfully make.

Seventh Parable.—*The Fish Net*, 47–49.

The *net* is the Gospel dispensation. The *fish* are the members of the Church; the *fishermen* are the divine agencies. The good fish are the *true;* the bad, the *false* professors of Christianity.

47. *Net*—The drag net, which sweeps the bottom of the fish pool. It is extended far into the sea, corked at the upper edge and leaded at the bottom, so as to intercept the fishes at the entire depth. The ends are then brought together so as to encompass them, and the whole are drawn in. *Every kind*—Men of every rank, class, nation, and colour obtain places in the comprehension of the Gospel.

48. *Full*—When the work of the Church on earth is completed, the Church, like a net of fishes, is drawn to the presence of its Lord, and the reckoning takes place. It will then be seen that in the apparent or visible Church, consisting of all professors, there is a real or invisible Church, consisting of all who are truly regenerate. The Church while on earth perpetually struggles to be pure; but, in her imperfect and militant state, a part of her trial is the existence of false professors whom she is unable to purify or to expel. *Bad*—The unpalatable or refuse part.

49. *End of the world*—The judgment is the end of the world. It is the close of the mixed condition of things, where

forth, and [v]sever the wicked from among the just,

50 [w]And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe, *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man *that is* a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure [x]*things* new and old.

53 ¶ And it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

v Chap. 25. 32.—w Verse 42.

x Cant. 7. 13—John 13. 34; 1 John 2. 7, 8.

good men and bad exist together in a state of trial. Each class undergoes the divine scrutiny and goes to his own place.

Angels—The angels seem to be represented by the fisherman, who both casts the Gospel net and separates the fish when drawn ashore. The fishermen, therefore, represent the messengers of God, human or superhuman; that is, his ministers on earth, and his angels at judgment. These are indeed the angels of the Church below and the Church above.

Sever the wicked from among the just—Terrible and yet glorious day! The Church shall then become pure. The kingdom of heaven will then become heaven itself. The kingdom of grace shall have closed, and the kingdom of glory shall have begun, never to close.

51. *Jesus saith*—The master has wisely taught his pupils, and wisely he now ascertains how well they have learned. A parable, unless its solution be understood, is but a petty story. *Understood*—Understood not merely the narrative as a tale, but its second and deeper meaning. *Yea, Lord*—They *said* they did, and they believed they did, and no doubt they did dimly understand him. But these parables foretold the destinies of the kingdom of God through coming ages, and dimly do we even yet comprehend the future, however well predicted.

52. *A householder*—A master of a family. *Bringeth forth*—As a provider for the family. The most suitable emblem of the Christian scribe or minister, who provides food for his spiritual family, the Church. *Treasure*—His store, cellar, or granary. *Things*—Provisions. *New and old*—The products of both the old year and the new. So the minister should be able to repeat and reimpress the good old truths, which the people have heard a thousand times, varied with truths they never heard before. And the same truth may be both old and new; old, because often heard; but new, from the fresh form or colouring with which it is invested, or the new evidence or impressiveness with which it is received by the mind.

There is a natural and sort of historical advancement in the seven parables. *First.* The sower commences, as it were, the Church, by sowing his seed among the various moral classes of our race. *Second.* The struggle between good and evil, to be permanent to the final separation. *Third.* The moral triumph of the good, even in this state of mixture and struggle. *Fourth.* The parallel progress and triumph of good in the individual heart. *Fifth.* The value of the Gospel treasure, even in its obscured and hidden state. *Sixth.* The worthiness of the Gospel pearl above all price. *Seventh.* The final deliverance of the true Church from impure membership.

§ 55.—JESUS REVISITS NAZARETH AND IS AGAIN REJECTED THERE, 53–58.

53. *Had finished these parables*—Being SEVEN in number; FOUR to the people at the sea side, and THREE to the disciples at his own residence, all illustrating the principles of the divine probationary kingdom or government of God. *He departed thence*—He left Capernaum.

54 [y]And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works?

55 [z]Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and [a]his brethren, [b]James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?

y Chapter 2. 23; Mark 6. 1; Luke 4. 16, 23. John 1. 45.—z Isaiah 49. 7; Mark 6. 3; Luke 3. 23; John 6. 42.—a Chapter 12. 46; John 2. 12.—b Mark 15. 40; Galatians 1. 19.

54. *Into his own country*—To Nazareth, the home of his childhood; in distinction from Capernaum, the residence of his manhood.

55. *Is not this the carpenter's son?*—Most conclusive question! It is probable that many of them had seen our Saviour, in his youth, labouring at the occupation of his father. Thus had he honoured and sanctified the labourer's calling, and shown that the secular duties rightly performed are a true service and acceptable to God. And if Christianity shows our Saviour as a carpenter, and his apostles as fishermen, how ought they to be ashamed of their mean pride who scorn the useful avocations of the labourer! Well would it be for society if there were less of extravagance and effeminate pride, and if Christians would adopt the maxim of the ancient Jews, that every man, however high his rank or intellectual his profession, should learn the mastery of some manual trade.

And his brethren—In regard to the brothers of our Lord, and the supposed perpetual virginity of the blessed mother, we may make the following remarks:

1. The supposed perpetuity is contradicted by the obvious, though not the necessary meaning of Matt. i, 25. See note on the passage. 2. It is plain that while there were three if not four cousins of our Lord in the number of his disciples, his brothers remained at Nazareth, not even believing upon him. 3. When his mother and brothers came from Nazareth, (Matt. xii, 46–50,) probably to induce him to retire from his ministry, his brothers and his cousins must have belonged to different parties. 4. Alford says that the phrase "brethren of the Lord" occurs ten times in the New Testament, and they are never called cousins. It is incredible, therefore, that they should have been other than literal brothers. 5. This presumption is increased by the fact that these brothers are mentioned in connection and in company with his *sisters* and his *mother*, all of whom collectively are called his "house" or family. If the mother was a literal mother, the sisters must have been literal sisters, and the brethren literal brothers. 6. Our Lord speaks of his house or family as a place wherein, as a prophet, he has no honour. But if this house consisted of cousins, and three or four of these cousins were his own disciples, who in addition to his mother believed upon him, how was he unhonoured in his own house?

Against this mass of reasoning there are two counter-arguments which admit of easy replies: 1. It appears that the cousins of Jesus, the sons of Mary, sister of the blessed mother, were named James, Joses, and Jude. It appears also that the brothers of Jesus were also named James, Joses, Jude, and Simon. Hence it is inferred that they were the same, and that the so-called brothers were only cousins. But we reply, although it may be singular that three or four couples of cousins should bear the same names, it was by no means improbable. It is quite credible that two sisters, themselves of the same name, should purposely give correspondent names to three of their children.

2. The second counter-argument is derived from the fact that our Lord committed the keeping of his mother not to these brethren, but to the apostle John

57 And they [c]were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, [d]A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And [e]he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

Chap. 11. 6; Mark 6. 3, 4. —*d* Luke 4. 24; John 4. 44.—*e* Mark 6. 5, 6.—*a* Mark 6. 14; Luke 9. 7.

How could he thus prefer an unrelated friend above a brother? For the same reason, we reply, that he could choose disciples from strangers rather than from his own house. He did not choose his beloved disciple from among his cousins who were his disciples. His brothers of his own house did not believe, did not honour him. He dealt in sharp words with them. John vii, 7. They were not found among his believers until after the resurrection. It cannot be wonderful then that these brethren should be set aside in comparison with the beloved disciple.

Upon the whole, we think it a clear case that the brethren of our Lord, so-called, were not cousins, but literal half brothers. The idea, therefore, that Mary was at once a wife and a nun, is an ecclesiastical tradition unsupported by Scripture, and is the offspring of the false notion of the superior sanctity of celibacy.

57. *Offended in him*—They were stumbled at this apparent superiority in one they would have to be no better than themselves. A stupid pride blinded their hearts.

58. *Did not many . . . works*—It would be a waste of divine power to perform miracles that would be disregarded and condemned by anticipation. Besides, it is probable that they abstained from affording him any opportunity for performing miracles of power and mercy, such as alone lay within the bounds of our Lord's mission. So that both morally and physically they rendered the performance of mighty works a thing out of the question. The evangelist Mark says strongly, "he could there do no mighty work;" because of course he could not do a useless and unsuitable deed. So man's faithlessness may bind the Lord's arm from performing miracles of mercy. A faithless Church restrains the convicting and converting Spirit. Unbelief defeats omnipotence. The same evangelist, Mark, vividly represents the woman with the issue of blood drawing the miraculous virtue forth from Jesus by the touch of her finger, put forth in faith. So that as faith divinely compels the virtue forth, so unbelief compels the virtue back into the Lord's person.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT that time [a]Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,

CHAPTER XIV.

§ 60.—Death of John the Baptist, 1–14.

It was while the apostles were on their trial mission that John was beheaded. Thus Jesus spreads his operations, and the harbinger leaves the scene, simultaneously. As an old writer says, Jesus provided that for one preacher slain twelve should spring up in his place.

1. *At that time*—In narrating the death of John the Baptist, Matthew follows a peculiar order of facts. He gives us: 1. A conversation of Herod with his servants, in which the king expresses the opinion that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, (verses 1, 2.) 2. To explain this expression of the king's, he goes back in time, and narrates how John was slain by Herod, (3–12.) 3. He last informs us how Jesus retired on receiving intelligence of the Baptist's death, (verse 13.) The real order of the facts in time was, *first*, The Baptist's death; *second*, The retirement of Jesus; and *third*, The conversation of Herod. The phrase, *at that time*, must therefore have an indefinite extension, and mean *at that general period* of our Lord's ministry.

Herod—This was Herod Antipas

This prince succeeded Herod, surnamed the Great, as ruler of Galilee, in the infancy of our Saviour, and is the only Herod so called afterward in the Gospels. He was the son of Herod the Great, (of whom we have given some account in chap. ii, 1,) by Malthace. When Herod the Great died, he appointed by will Archelaus, his son by the same Malthace, king of Judea, and this Antipas tetrarch of Galilee; but this will must receive the sanction of the supreme authority, Augustus, emperor of Rome. Both brothers appeared before the emperor, who so changed the arrangement as to give to Archelaus the province of Judea, with the title, not of king, but of *ethnarch*, (or *nation-ruler*;) to Herod Philip, a son by Cleopatra of Jerusalem, Batana, Trachonitis, and Auranitis, provinces lying east of the Sea of Galilee; and to this Herod Antipas, Galilee and Perea. (See note on chap. ii, 22.) After the banishment of Archelaus by the emperor, Judea had no more a native king or prince. Shiloh had come, and the sceptre departed. It was placed under the general Roman prefecture of Syria, and was ruled by a series of special Roman governors, residing at Cesarea. Such was the government during the most of Jesus's life and all of his ministry. The successive governors were Coponius, Ambivius, Annius Rufus, Valerius Gratus, and Pontius Pilate. Herod Antipas was first married to a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia. Forming an unlawful attachment for Herodias, the wife of his brother Herod Philip, (see note on verse 3,) he became involved in a course of guilt which ended in his ruin. Aretas commenced a war upon Herod to avenge the insult to his daughter. See note on verse 6. Herod's armies were defeated, and ruin seemed impending. This he evaded by appealing to Rome, and obtaining from the emperor an order requiring Aretas to desist from the war.

Herodias seemed to be his evil genius. When Herod's nephew, Agrippa, brother of Herodias, had obtained from the emperor the title of king, she prompted her unlawful husband to ask the same dignity at Rome. Agrippa anticipated the design, and when they appeared at the court he met them with an accusation of treason against the emperor Herod was therefore deposed and banished, with Herodias, to Lyons in Gaul, where he died.

Tetrarch—A Greek word, signifying a *ruler of a fourth part of a kingdom.* Under the order of the emperor, the kingdom of Herod the Great was, upon his death, divided into three *tetrarchies*, and given to Herod's sons, as already mentioned. The tetrarchs and ethnarchs were very ambitious of the title of king, and were often so styled by courtesy. *Heard of the fame of Jesus*—Herod Antipas was near at the birth of Jesus, through his life, and at his death. He had attained manhood when the arrival of the Magi, announcing a newborn rival for the throne, created a panic at the court of Herod his father. He may have shared in the excitement, and have imagined that the rival prince was slaughtered in the massacre at Bethlehem. As ruler of Galilee he was the temporal sovereign of Jesus; and from his jealousy, suspicions, and threats as ruler, Jesus was obliged to be cautious in his own movements, and to hold the enthusiasm of his followers in check. Indeed, from about this time it may be remarked that our Saviour's influence is more spreading, yet more secret. The ruling powers of Judea have decided against him because he is no conquering Messiah. The ruler of Galilee is suspicious lest he prove a warlike opponent. Our Lord's greatest miracles, the feeding of the multitudes, are in the dominions of Herod Philip.

2. *Said unto his servants*—Why Herod should thus express himself to his servants, so likely to have been skeptical and dissolute men, seems at first view difficult to say. But one or two apparently accidental allusions elsewhere in the Gospels afford, perhaps, some explanation. We learn from Luke viii, 3, that among those who administered to Jesus of their substance was *Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward.* And again in Acts xiii, 1, we are told that among other distinguished converts was

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works [1]do show forth themselves in him.

1 Or. *are wrought by him.*

3 ¶ [b]For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

b Mark 6. 17; Luke 3. 19, 20.

Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch; that is, was his foster brother. We see then, that as at a later period there were saints in Cesar's household, so there were also believers in the household of Herod. Through these the solemn reports of the deeds and teachings of Jesus doubtless reached the guilty king. Consequently "he was desirous of seeing him, because he had heard many things of him." And to such servants he could doubtless express the believing sentiments attributed to him.

This is John the Baptist—Herod Antipas did not identify Jesus as the newborn King of the Jews announced to his father's house by the Magi. That fear had long since been dismissed and forgotten. Nor did he seem distinctly to understand that Jesus claimed Messiahship. Antipas was king by descent from his Herodian paternity, and maternally from the more noble Asmonean line; but how feebly could both these compare with an heirship like that of Jesus from the ancient line of David and Solomon. Herod was Edomite; but purely national was the blood of the family of Nazareth.

Jesus did at last appear before Herod, (Luke xxiii, 6–12;) sent in bonds by Pilate to Herod as the subject of his jurisdiction. Herod was at first interested to see Jesus, in hopes of beholding some display of that miraculous power by which he is at the present time so much perplexed and harrowed in conscience. But when Jesus maintained an impenetrable silence, the irritated Antipas arrayed him in tawdry robes in mockery of his royalty, and remanded him to Pilate. *Risen from the dead*—His conscience seemed to conjure up the murdered John from his grave. Luke adds that the tyrant was "perplexed;" and when it was rumoured that Jesus was the risen John, and one courtier suggested that he was Elias, and another that he was some one of the ancient prophets reappearing, Herod Antipas finishes with: "John have I beheaded, but who is this of whom I hear such things?" These conjectures imply, not a belief in a transmigration of souls, but simply in extraordinary resurrections. The whole account furnishes a vivid picture of a profligate set of men, interrupted in the midst of their riot and wickedness by supernatural rumours and horrors of conscience. A comparison of Mark viii, 15, with Matt. xvi, 6, furnishes reason to suppose that Herod was a Sadducee. For in the one passage the *leaven* or doctrine of Herod appears to be the same as the *leaven of the Sadducees*, and Luke tells us (ix, 7) that he was "perplexed because it was said of some that John was risen from the dead; and of some that Elias had appeared; and of others that one of the old prophets was risen again." So thickly did these rumours come that he seems to have given in the point that the murdered John had reappeared from the grave. Though a Sadducee, yet guilt made him a cowardly sort of a believer. So true it is that irreligious men are often tremblingly superstitious. Being unconsoled by the truths of religion, they are exposed to be frightened by any form of horror suggested to the imagination by a guilty conscience. *Therefore mighty works*—The implication is that John had acquired a miracle-working power after rising from the dead. This is a striking incidental confirmation of John x, 41, that John wrought no miracles while living.

3. *For Herod had*—The evangelist proceeds to explain the remark of Herod by recapitulating the history of John's martyrdom. *Herodias' sake*—She had in vain endeavoured to induce Herod to perpetrate the deed; and so finally

4 For John said unto him, [c]It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, [d]because they counted him as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birthday

[c] Lev. 18. 16; 20. 21.

[d] Chap. 21. 26; Luke 20. 6.

availed herself of the opportunity here afforded. The oath fairly entrapped Herod into an obligation to do what she required; and eager for revenge, as well as to put an end to John's dangerous influence over the king's conscience against her, she perseveringly refused to let the monarch free from her snare.

Herodias was daughter of the young Aristobulus, one of the accomplished but unfortunate sons of Herod by the beautiful Mariamne; and she belonged therefore to the noble line of Asmonean princes. She seems to have possessed the beauty and accomplishments of that princess, without many of her virtues. Her brother Agrippa, a prince of singular talent and fascinating address, passed through a variety of fortunes, in which he was befriended by her, and he ultimately succeeded Herod Philip in the eastern tetrarchy, under the title, from the Emperor Caius Caligula, of king. Compare note on chap. ii, 1. Herodias became the wife (not of Herod Philip the tetrarch, but) of her uncle, Herod Philip, another son of Herod the Great, whose mother was Mariamne, the daughter of Simon the High Priest. See Herod's family tree, p. 33.

The account of John's death given by Josephus varies from that of Matthew by making Herod's fear of John the motive for his execution. This was doubtless true, though the evangelist's minuter narrative furnishes the actual occasion. Josephus confirms the Gospel narrative in many points. He says:

"Now some of the Jews thought that the destruction of Herod's army came from God, and that very justly, as a punishment of what he did against John that was called the Baptist; for Herod slew him, although he was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue both as to righteousness one toward another, and piety toward God, and so to come to baptism. Now when others came in crowds about him—for they were greatly moved by hearing his words—Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, (for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise,) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause, and not bring himself into difficulties by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late. Accordingly he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicions, to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death."

4. *It is not lawful*—It is well when ministers dare rebuke the crimes of politicians and rulers. The doctrine that there is *no higher law* than wicked rulers are pleased to enact, is essential atheism.

And what adds to the force of John's example in reproving the wickedness of rulers, is the fact that John, it seems, *faced Herod Antipas himself* with this rebuke. He "said *unto him*, It is not lawful for *thee*." At what interview between the tyrant and the prophet this rebuke took place is not recorded. Very possibly Herod, knowing John's great influence over the conscience of the people, had endeavoured by personal consultation to obtain the Baptist's sanction of his adultery; or he may have heard of John's inveighing against his profligacy, and have arrested him and brought the Baptist into his presence, where of course he would have found reproof not recanted, but reaffirmed.

6. *Herod's birthday was kept*—According to Mark this was done with great magnificence; for "he made a great feast for his lords, high captains, and the chief persons of Galilee." The nobility of Galilee must have come some distance for the occasion. For it

was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced [2] before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

8 And she, [e] being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John the Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was [f] sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*.

10 And he sent, and [g] beheaded John in the prison.

2 Gr. *in the midst.*—*e* 2 Chron. 22. 2, 3; Mark 6. 24.

f Dan. 6. 14, 16.—*g* 2 Chron. 36. 19; John 2. 30; Rev. 11. 7.

is plain, from the rapidity with which John was executed, that this celebration took place at or near the fortress of Macherus, where John was imprisoned, in southern Perea, near the confines of Arabia. It is highly probable that Herod was at this time engaged in war with Aretas, king of Arabia, for reasons fully narrated in our note upon verse 1. This is confirmed from the fact that the executioner of John is by Mark called by the Latin term *spiculator*, which implies a military officer. The adulterous Herodias, the guilty cause of the war, like another Helen, is present to cheer her champion and amuse his festal hours. *Danced*—Female dancers in the East are a customary part of great entertainments. On this occasion the dancer was of high birth, being no other than the princess Salome, daughter of Herodias.

7. *Promised with an oath*—To reward the graceful dancer was customary; but Herod wills to reward royally. Calmet mentions a Shah Abbas, who promised to a dancer, during a drunken carouse, the revenues of a province. After his recovery, at the instance of his vizier, he broke his promise and gave her a present of two hundred pounds. Salome, doubtless, might have preferred half the kingdom, but her mother's will preferred *revenge* to *dominion*. Perhaps she feared that Herod, in sober moments, would break his oath. She seems by her language to be in a hurry to have the present while the revel is on: "Give *me here*" the head. And the deed seems to have been perpetrated with an impatient haste, perhaps in the dead hour of night, with no uncommon mixture of revelry and slaughter

8. *A charger*—The Greek word signifies a *flat board*, used for any purpose, as for a *writing-table* or *tablet*. In Luke xi, 39, it is translated a *platter*; that is, a large dish, in which meat or other food is carved or served up. The old English word *charger* is connected with the whole family of words implying the idea of something *carrying* or *carried*. As the simplest root in the English language may be specified the syllable *car*; then we have *cart*, *carriage*, *chariot*, *cargo*, *charge*, *carry*, *carrier*, and *charger*. Hence the platter was called a *charger*, because it was *charged* with a burden to *carry*.

9. *The king was sorry*—Though he had before desired and plotted John's death, yet is he now appalled at such a bloody request from this young girl. It was a fearful story to be told to the people whose reverence for John was so profound. Besides, the tyrant himself shared the religious awe for the Baptist's character and mission.

Oath's sake—Might he not as well be a perjurer as a murderer? *Them which sat with him*—A point of honour rises here. He must not flinch, but keep his pledge before his honourable fellows. A duellist or a gambler is the very model of such faith.

10. *Beheaded John in the prison*—From the banquet of dissolute royalty the executioner goes, probably by night, to the prophet's dungeon. No doubt the victim met the messenger with serene fortitude, and passed with final triumph through his severe transition to his blessed reward. He was the greatest of prophets and the last of the pre-Christian martyrs. He was the moral terror of his guilty age. Nobly did he fulfil

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought *it* to her mother.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

13 ¶ [h] When Jesus heard *of it*, he departed thence by ship into

h Chap. 10. 23; 12. 15; Mark 6. 32; Luke 9. 10; John 6. 1, 2.

his office as reformer and preparer. If at one moment he was perplexed with the mysterious slowness of his principal, never, for even that moment, did his faith in the true one fail. Not many months did he precede his Lord in the path to glory.

11. *Brought it to her mother*—A dutiful present from a murderess daughter to a murderess mother! Herod Antipas and Herodias were, as we have already stated, subsequently banished by the Roman emperor to Lyons, in France, where they passed the remainder of their lives in disgrace. It does not appear that justice ever overtook Salome.

12. *His disciples came...buried it*—Faithful to the last, they obtain the corpse of their murdered master. The cruel king, glad perhaps to soothe the people by some apparent clemency, does not prevent. *Went and told Jesus*—Doubtless the Lord well knew the whole story before they came to tell it. And to whom should these orphans of the martyred prophet go but to him, the prophet's greater Lord? Yet it is doubtful whether they ever fully transferred their allegiance to him. Disciples who only knew John's baptism are found in the subsequent Scripture history. Acts xviii, 23; xix, 3. Indeed, even to the present day a sect exists in the East claiming to be "John's disciples," whose principles seem to be tinged with Gnosticism, and whose views of both John and Christ vary far from the doctrines of the New Testament.

13. *Jesus heard of it, he departed*—The death of John transpired while the twelve were absent on their mission, described in chapter tenth. Their return and the news of the Baptist's death concurring in time, Jesus took his departure northward. Our Lord gives to his disciples, as a reason for this departure, (Mark vi, 31,) their need of retirement and rest. And in relation to them, it was a true and a tender reason; but in regard to himself and his mission a far higher reason existed.

When Jesus, at his early home in Nazareth, heard that John was baptizing in Jordan, he doubtless realized that he was summoned to enter upon the preparation for his ministry. Yet after his baptism he still stood in the back ground while his messenger was preparing his way before him. After that time, the key of all the transactions between the Baptist and the Messiah is furnished in John's words, (John iii. 30,) "He must increase and I must decrease." The subordinate must gradually retire before his superior. When John was imprisoned, (Matt. iv, 12,) therefore, a period arrived in which our Lord commenced his opening ministration. The subordinate ceases his labours, but he and his disciples are still extant. But with the forerunner's expiring breath the interregnum closes, and the Lord enters upon his full office. At that same period our Lord is commissioning his twelve, and sending them forth as apostles to the twelve tribes. His fame is filling the halls of Herod Antipas. It is both a crisis of great danger and the period of his broadest enlargement. To avoid the ruling powers, whose eyes are now in search of him, he departs for Northern Galilee, where he spends the whole of this period of his ministry. (See Historical Synopsis.) He crosses the Lake of Gennesaret, followed by thousands; he is at one time at the extreme northwest, even at Tyre and Sidon; and soon at the extreme northeast at Cæsarea Philippi. Though an apparent refugee from the ruling power, his field is broadening, his fame spreading, and his disciples unite in the completest recognition of his Messiahship. That meridian point attained, this period closes and the ministry of sorrow commences. Chap. xvi, 21.

a desert place apart: and when the people had heard *thereof*, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and [1] was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

15 ¶ [j]And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send

[i] Chapter 9. 36; Mark 6. 34.

[j] Mark 6. 35; Luke 9. 12; John 6. 5.

He departed...by ship into a desert place—Matthew mentions not whither he departs. But Luke states (ix, 10) that it was to the desert near Bethsaida; and John (vi, 1) that it was beyond (on the east side of) the Lake of Gennesaret. At this place (probably Butaiha, see note on 15–21) he fed the five thousand, and returning thence he recrossed, walking upon the sea.

Across the lake Jesus was out of the dominion of Herod Antipas, the murderer of the Baptist, and whose eye was already directed toward himself. Jesus is now within the tetrarchy of Herod Philip, a prince of remarkable mildness and justice, especially for a Herod. The Saviour, therefore, dares perform a miracle of public notoriety without enjoining secrecy upon its subjects. Yet even here he does not linger long after its performance.

When the people—It appears from John vi, 4, that a passover was nigh at hand; and *the people* consisted of crowds or caravans on their way to Jerusalem. *Followed him on foot*—As his boat crossed the lake from Capernaum, coasting perhaps along the northern shore, passing the entrance of the Jordan, where Bethsaida stood, the people ran around the northern shore and arrived at Butaiha. The multitudes "ran" so rapidly that, according to Mark, they "outwent" the boat and "came unto him" as he landed; "and" says Luke, "he received them."

14. *Jesus went forth*—From the boat. *Saw a great multitude*—He desired retirement and rest, when lo! a crowd and new labour. His fame is not only disturbing the court of the king, but stirring the masses of the people. Our Lord is soon after compelled to retire to more distant parts, and to enjoin secrecy and silence upon the subjects of his miracles, and even upon the apostles in their ministry.

§ 63.—Miracle of Feeding the Five Thousand, 15–21.

The fullest account is given in Mark vi, 34–44; and some additional particulars are furnished in John vi, 1–14.

The precise spot where this miracle was performed is not certainly known; but the most reliable opinion, we think, is that of Dr. Thomson, who, in view of all the facts detailed 15–33, is very sure that it was at Butaiha, an appendage to Bethsaida lying to its southwest, along the shore of the lake. He says, speaking of Butaiha:

"This bold headland marks the spot, according to my topography, where the five thousand were fed with five barley-loaves and two small fishes. From the four narratives of this stupendous miracle we gather: 1st. That the place belonged to Bethsaida; 2d. That it was a desert place; 3d. That it was near the shore of the lake, for they came to it by boats; 4th. That there was a mountain close at hand; 5th. That it was a smooth grassy spot, capable of seating many thousand people. Now all these requisites are found in this exact locality, and nowhere else so far as I can discover. This Butaiha belonged to Bethsaida. At this extreme southeast corner of it the mountain shuts down upon the lake bleak and barren. It was doubtless desert then as now, for it is not capable of cultivation. In this little cove the ships (boats) were anchored. On this beautiful sward at the base of the rocky hill the people were seated." See our map, p. 62.

15. *Disciples came...saying*—Previously to this, (as we are informed by John,) the Saviour had asked Philip, (for the purpose, as we say, of drawing

the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, [k] he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and [l] were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

21 And they that had eat-

k Chap. 15. 36.—*l* Exod. 16. 8, 12; 1 Kings 17. 12, 16; 2 Kings 4. 43, 44; Prov. 13. 25

him out,) "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" To which Philip returns a dubious answer. Soon after the disciples put the question of supply to the Lord. This reconciles the evangelists, one of whom seems to make the apostles speak first, and the other, Jesus. There was a natural propriety in asking this question of Philip, who was a native of Bethsaida.

17. *They say*—Andrew in particular speaks for the rest, that the food is carried by a lad. So that a boy carries the rations of more than five thousand persons. These barley-loaves were an inferior kind of food. Tholuck quotes in proof the Talmud. "Jochanan says: The barley has become beautiful. The reply is: Say that to the horses and asses." The *loaves* were a large thin cake or biscuit made probably of barley, about half an inch thick, to be broken and not cut. We never read of bread being *cut* in Scripture but always *broken*.

19. *On the grass*—It is called a desert as being uninhabited, not as being barren. It seems to have been a grassy plain. *Sit down*—In parties, or as we may say, in separate tables, as Mark informs us. Thus the whole was more orderly.

20. *All eat, and were filled*—Like the widow's cruse of oil, when a part was taken, its place was instantly supplied by divine power. The loaf remained still as large when the piece was broken off, and each piece in hand imperceptibly became large as the loaf. Was this an original act of creation? Not necessarily. He who guided through the water the fishes to Peter's net could guide the invisible atomic elements, in however gaseous a form through the air, to form upon the loaf, the material bread. This is but hastening the process that ever is taking place in the growth of the grain. There is but the additional modification produced by heat in the oven; but even this is only a different arrangement of the particles. *Twelve baskets full*—This shows that the miracle was performed upon the bread and not upon the stomach. There was an actual increase of the amount of the material, not a supernatural cessation of the appetite under an imaginary or conceptual food.

The lad's basket could doubtless have carried the original loaves and fishes. But when a divine bounty gives (so the Saviour's miracle teaches) it gives plentifully and worthily, the wealth of a God.

The multitudes, John informs us, felt the bounty and the miracle. Tradition had reported to them that the Messiah would rain manna from heaven; and they now exclaim: "This is of a truth that prophet which should come into the world." They were ready to place upon him the Messianic crown, with the expectation that the time of miraculous plenty and easy life was at hand under his reign. So little, alas! did the most munificent miracle spiritualize their hearts.

21. *Five thousand men besides*—So that we know not the full number,

en were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

22 ¶ And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 [m]And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: [n]and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

m Mark 6. 46.

n John 6. 16.

John informs us that the passover was near, and doubtless these were a caravan on their way to Jerusalem. They were led out of the way to follow the wonders of the true paschal lamb.

On this miracle we may remark:

1. It bears a striking analogy to the miracle of changing the water into wine. It is not indeed, like that, a sensible *transformation;* but both are a *hastening of a natural process* by Him who thereby claims to be the Lord of nature as well as of grace. They are the two elements, too, bread and wine, which in the eucharist are combined to represent the blood and the body of the Lord, given for the spiritual nourishment of his people.

2. The whole miracle is physically an act of mercy to the bodies of the suffering multitude. But it was intended to guide them to the full discovery of Him who could perform a higher act of mercy upon the soul. Of that higher mercy it was no doubt an emblem, so that this, with all the other wonders of our Lord, was both a miracle and a symbol.

3. It is left on record for us that we may recognize Christ as our bread of life. His blood may be but a drop, his death but a brief transaction; but their efficacy can be reproduced for all the multitudes of all generations, and feed even our souls with eternal life.

§ 64.—THE MIRACULOUS WALKING ON THE SEA, 22–33.

22. *Constrained his disciples*—Why were they unwilling to go? We should be wholly at a loss to know, did not John (vi, 15) state the fact that the multitude wished to make Jesus a king. It is therefore highly probable that the disciples were anxious to stay and see his promotion to the Jewish crown. But this design of the multitude was alike contrary to the divine order, and likely to expose Jesus to the hostility of Herod Philip.

Mark says that Jesus sent the disciples "to the other side to Bethsaida, while he sent away the people." A glance at our map of Gennesaret, (p. 62) will show that Bethsaida is strictly not on the opposite or western side, but on the north. To meet this difficulty sacred geographers have placed a supposed *Bethsaida* on the western side, south of Capernaum, as is seen upon our map of PALESTINE. For this there seems to be no sufficient reason. Jesus sent the disciples to the other side; yet *to Bethsaida*, by the way, until he had dismissed the people. That done, he would have joined them at Bethsaida, en route to *the other side*. As we have noted on verse 14, it is probable that the boat coasted along the north shore, by Bethsaida. The original purpose of Jesus to join them at Bethsaida was changed by the sudden gust, which drove them southward.

23. *Up into a mountain*—The natural position of the locality seems to fix with a singular certainty what mountain this was. A mountain at the extreme southeast margin of Butaiha shuts down upon the lake. This was doubtless the scene of our Lord's midnight prayer. By day it would have commanded a view of the lake, the storm, and the tossing boat of the disciples.

Evening was come—This is the second, or later evening of which the evening in verse 15 was the earlier, or afternoon. The former was from three to six, the latter from six to nine. Jesus was praying while the ship was struggling with the billows. So the

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, [o]tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him [p]walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, [q]Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

o Isa. 54. 11.—p Job 9. 8; Psa. 93. 3, 4; 104. 3; Rev. 10. 2, 5, 8.—q Acts 23. 11.

great Intercessor still lives, while his Church is tossing on the waves of time.

24. *Tossed with waves...wind was contrary*—"Through one of the deep ravines, which have been described as breaking through the hills to the shore, there came down a storm of wind on the lake."—*Stanley.*

25. *Fourth watch of the night*—A watch is the regular period which a soldier or sentinel keeps guard by night before he is relieved by a successor. The ancient Jewish watches were three a night, the middle being at midnight. But just before Matthew wrote, the Jews had adopted the Roman custom of four watches of three hours each. These watches began at six, nine, twelve, and three, so that it was about three in the morning that our Lord made himself visible to his disciples. The disciples, starting from Butaiha toward Bethsaida, had toiled in rowing from eve until near morning, and had made but a little more than three miles from their starting place, having been driven southward, below the route to Capernaum, in the direction of the plain of Gennesaret. At three of the morning the dim form of Jesus walking upon the surface of the heaving billows is descried by the disciples in the ship. Stier eloquently says:

"*What is that?* they ask among themselves in terror; and the fear which now first breaks out in earnest, precisely when the helper comes, answers, It is an *apparition*, a *phantasm;* and when the terrifying word is spoken they *cry out* for fear. Is it a welcome from the Sheol, to which they fancy they are now near? This it cannot be, for the thing upon the sea assuredly looks like the Lord. It is more likely, therefore, to occur to them, that their excited imagination now morbidly deludes them with the figure of Him who has been so much in their thoughts—if, indeed, they have any definite idea at all of this *phantasm.* Man, in his present state, in the fear and perplexity of spirit which may so easily overtake him, sees apparitions; and takes even his Saviour, as he draws nigh in divine power, at first to be such. This, however, is always better than, in the opposite folly of boldness, to take a *phantasm* of his own thoughts as the Lord and Saviour."

27. *It is I*—So does the Christian in the time of trial recognize the presence and cheering voice of his Saviour.

28. *Peter*—Ever forward to venture at the risk of failure. *Bid me*—He knew that he could do so only by his Master's power, and he only wished to show what confidence he had, that by that power he could do anything. This was a noble faith, but it was mixed with vain glory. Of course the Lord must select *me* to be the hero.

29. *Come*—Our Lord did not quite say, Come *to me*, but *Come;* and Peter did *come*, but not quite to Jesus. Jesus came to him. *He walked on the water*—So that Peter actually performed the miracle.

30 But when he saw the wind [3]boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, [r]O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth [s]thou art the Son of God.

34 ¶ [t]And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

3 Or, *strong*.—*r* Mark 4. 40; 16. 14; Luke 24. 25.—*s* Psa. 2. 7; chap. 16. 16; 26. 63; Mark 1. 1; Luke 4. 41; John 1. 49; 6. 69; 11. 27; Acts 8. 37; Rom. 1. 4.—*t* Mark 6. 53.

30. *The wind boisterous*—The windy waves were stronger than Peter's faith. "To understand the causes of these sudden and violent tempests we must remember that the lake lies low, six hundred feet lower than the ocean; that the vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of the Hauran and upward to snowy Hermon; that the water-courses have cut out profound ravines and wild gorges, converging to the head of this lake, and that these act like gigantic funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains. The faith of Peter in desiring and daring to set foot on such a sea is most striking and impressive, more so indeed than its failure after the attempt. Those winds are not only violent, but they come down suddenly, and often when the sky is perfectly clear."—*Dr. Thomson.*

There can be but little fair doubt that this was a symbol as well as a miracle. The ship full of disciples is no unapt symbol of the Church struggling through darkness and storms. The Saviour is ever her deliverer in the darkest hour.

32. *Were come into the ship*—John says *they willingly received him into the ship;* for previously, supposing him to be a *spirit*, they dreaded his approach. But lo! it was their Lord, and gladly did they welcome him. *The wind ceased*—The storm then was *permitted*—that is, it was *not prevented*—by Jesus. The elements were left by him to blow with all their natural power until he entered the boat. Such is an image of the trials which nature in this scene of probation forces upon us, and which God does not prevent until their work in our trial is done. The instant cessation of the wind was an additional miracle, and probably impressed the disciples scarce less than the walking upon the sea.

33. *They that were in the ship*—There does not appear that any others were in the ship than the apostles. *Worshipped*—Reverently bowing and making the following confession. *The Son of God*—These words can mean nothing less than the memorable confession made soon after in xvi, 16: *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* This scene doubtless tended to produce the faith for that confession; and surely none could be the more proper person to make it than this same Peter.

34. *Land of Gennesaret*—The plain of Gennesaret. It is on the western side of the lake, immediately south of Capernaum. It is described by Josephus as having been a spot where nature was ambitious of lavishing her finest powers. Dr. Olin thus describes it: "This plain, which I think is about four miles in length by two and a half in breadth, is bounded eastward by the sea, and on the west by the mountains, which recede from the shore to Mejdal, and having made the compass of that side of the plain, again returns to the beach at its northern end. The two extremities of the plain are thus contracted to a point, while the western boundary along the mountain is curved, and the eastern on the sea is a nearly straight line. The soil is of a dark colour, very deep, and evidently of the greatest fertility."

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;

36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and [u] as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

u Chap. 9. 20· Mark 3. 10; Luke 6. 19; Acts 19. 12.

Over this beautiful plain our Lord and his disciples often walked, and there he uttered many of his discourses, drawing his illustrations from the varied scenes of earth, sea, and sky around him. As it lies south of Capernaum, the disciples, who started first toward Bethsaida for Capernaum, must have been driven far out of their course.

35. *That place*—Not precisely Capernaum, but the inhabited plain adjacent to it. It is nowhere intimated that Capernaum was in this plain. It could hardly be necessary to say that his fellow-townsmen in Capernaum knew him. *Sent out into all that country*—That their whole locality might have the benefit of his unexpected visit.

36. *Hem of his garment*—The fringe directed by Moses to be worn as the distinguishing badge of an Israelite. Nor is it wonderful that these people, learning the miracle of feeding the thousands, hearing, perhaps, from the apostles his walking the sea, and beholding his manifold miracles of mercy, should reverence him as a Divine Being incarnate.

When from the plain of Gennesaret Jesus went to Capernaum, many of the multitude, as John informs us, from the other side, arriving, found him there to their astonishment. A conversation at length ensuing, is detailed by that evangelist. In it Jesus exposes to their own view their material and selfish motives. See note on verse 20. He endeavours in vain to awaken a purer faith and a more elevated view. Their stubborn unsusceptibility so manifests itself that Jesus wraps his truths in figure and parable, and leaves their hearts in their chosen hardness.

CHAPTER XV.

THEN [a] came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

2 [b] Why do thy disciples transgress [c] the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

a Mark 7. 1.—b Mark 7. 5.—c Colossians 2. 8

CHAPTER XV.

§ 66.—Debate with the Pharisees in regard to Traditions, 1–20.

The scenes of love and faith closing the last chapter are now suddenly reversed. The third passover of our Lord's ministry to which these vast multitudes were travelling, had now passed, but which, on account of the hostile dispositions of the ruling powers, he did not attend, but remained in the northern parts of Galilee. The Jews, not finding our Lord at the passover, seem to have sent a portion of their number to Capernaum to open a *debate* with him. They commenced it with a challenge in regard to the disrespect of his disciples toward the traditions of the elders, in not washing their hands before they ate. Our Lord firmly meets them by showing that their traditions both contradicted the law of God, and are founded upon a false and superstitious morality.

1. *Then came*—Our Lord was probably at Capernaum. *Were of Jerusalem*—And probably *from* Jerusalem. *Saying*—They seem to have come with a quarrel in their mouths.

2. *Tradition of the elders*—That is, of the ancient commentators, the teachers of the Mosaic law. The written law of Moses is contained in the Old Testament. But besides, the Jews had oral law, which they pretended was handed down from Moses by verbal tradition. At the time of our Saviour this was not reduced to writing. But it was afterward compiled in The Talmud, now extant; of which the two parts are called the Mishna, or Text, and the Gemara, or Commentary.

Extravagant were the praises lavished

3 But he answered and said unto them, [d]Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

4 For God commanded, saying, [e]Honour thy father and mother: and, [f]He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, [g]*It is* a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.* [h]Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

d Mark 7. 6, 8, 13; Col. 2. 8, 23; Titus 1. 14. *e* Exodus 20. 12; Leviticus 19. 3; Deuteronomy 5. 16; Proverbs 23. 22; Ephesians 6. 2.

f Ex. 21. 17; Lev. 20 9; Deut. 27. 16; Prov. 20. 20; 30. 17.—*g* Mark 7. 11, 12.—*h* Psa. 119. 126, 139; Jer. 8. 8; Hos. 4. 6; Mal. 2. 7, 9; Rom. 3. 31.

by the Pharisees upon these Traditions. "The written word is *water*, said they; but the interpretation, and that which is added to it, is *wine*." "If the scribes say the right is left, hear them." Thus the foundations of morality were undermined. *Wash not their hands*—The Pharisees select for debate a point with which morality has very little to do, and the law of God nothing. But the washings here mentioned were very positively insisted upon by the Jewish doctors. The Talmud says: "He who eats bread with unwashen hands is as bad as if he were to commit fornication." The Rabbi Akiba was once imprisoned, and only water sufficient to drink allowed him. But he chose rather to die of thirst than to eat anything with unwashen hands. How enormous, then, to their view, must have been this *crime* of our Lord's disciples! They *wash not their hands!* They had better break any command in the decalogue. And though the Jews open this quarrel with the disciples, it is plain they intend a blow at the Master himself. A subject for a decisive issue is now laid open.

3. *He answered and said*—Jesus knows that a challenge is intended, but he does not shun to meet it. They come armed with the traditions of the elders; he meets them with the law of Jehovah. It is man's authority opposed by the authority of God. *Commandment of God*—When God speaks, let man keep silence.

4. *God commanded*—There are some who deny the authority of the Old Testament, yet admit the New. Our Saviour here sets his seal to the divine mission of Moses, and declares that the decalogue is God's law. *Honour thy father*—Our Saviour selects the precept where the law coincides with the plainest dictate of nature, and with the universal conscience and customs of mankind

5. *A gift*—That is, a *corban*, or *thing consecrated* to God. If a thing were consecrated to God, that, by Jewish tradition, rendered it exempt from every other claim; even from the duty of supporting one's parents. A form of this kind of vowing was: "Let what I may gain be devoted, so that *my father*, even, may eat nothing of it." *Thou*—Our Lord gives the words as if addressed to the parents. The Jews held that if the child should say this thing even in a moment of anger, it was still binding. And Lightfoot is quoted by Alford as showing that the mere utterance of the word *corban* absolved the utterer, even though he made no consecration of his property.

The meaning of the address to the parent here given by our Lord, may be thus rendered: "My parent, that property of mine by which thou mightest be supported or benefitted, is a gift consecrated to God; thou canst therefore have no share of it."

6. *He shall be free*—These words let it be observed, are printed in italics. This means that they are not in the original Greek, but are inserted by the English translators on their own authority, in order to make sense. But it may be doubted whether they are properly inserted here. The whole sentence preceding this phrase may be thus render-

7 *Ye* [i]hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,
8 [j]This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.
9 But in vain they do worship me, [k]teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

10 ¶ [l]And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:
11 [m]Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.
12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou

i Mark 7. 6.—*j* Isaiah 29. 13; Ezekiel 33. 31.
k Isa. 29. 13; Col. 2. 18-22; Titus 1. 14.

l Mark 7. 14.—*m* Acts 10. 15; Romans 14. 14, 17, 20; 1 Tim. 4. 4; Titus 1. 15.

ed: "Whosoever shall say... It is a gift, etc., he may not honour his father or his mother."

It is plain our Lord here holds that the fifth commandment requires of the child the duty, when needed, of providing a necessary support for the parent in his age. So the Jewish writer Philo says: "What the children have belongs to the parents." So Solomon had declared before our Saviour. Proverbs xxviii, 24: "Whoso robbeth or withdraweth from father or mother, is the companion of the destroyer." When we think how liable the Jewish child might be in a fit of anger to utter this corban or vow to starve his parent, it can be realized how likely the custom was to destroy the dutiful conduct of children to the parent. And yet these men thought it a terrible offence to God to eat without washing the hands! This reminds one of the strictness with which Romish priests compel their followers to eat no meat on Friday, but indulge them with comparative ease in thefts, falsehoods, or intemperance. Indeed, the Romish trust in tradition, derived from the *fathers* of the dark and ignorant ages, in depreciation of the Scriptures, is precisely *the same crime over again* that was committed by the Jewish doctors of our Lord's day.

7. *Ye hypocrites*—For fabricating a religion without morality. *Prophesy of you*—Isaiah, by inspiration, describing such characters as yours beforehand. The class and the race are indeed foreseen by God as recurring, and are so predescribed once for all.

8. *Lips... heart*—With their lips they utter the pious *corban* or *consecration*. With their hearts they mean to break the decalogue, and rob a parent.

9. *In vain they do worship me*—Their very prayers offered in that spirit are a mockery and abomination to God.

10. *Called the multitude*—The Pharisees, who had come all the way from Jerusalem to open the debate in such fierce style, now sink into the back ground, and the Lord turns to the people.

11. *Not that which goeth into the mouth... cometh out*—That is, not the material food that enters the man's stomach. This is set in contrast to that which goeth *out* of man; that is, the *moral action*, that goeth forth from the man's will and intention. A man's intentional words defile the soul. And so do his actions, and even his thoughts, for they all alike go forth *from* himself.

Intemperance in food or drink may indeed morally defile a man. But even here the defilement proceeds not from the material contact received, but from the forthgoing will and act by which those foods are taken. Indeed, the whole force of our Lord's maxim is, that *not physical touch* but *moral action* makes a man truly impure before God.

12. *Then came his disciples*—Both the doctors and the multitude are now gone, and the talk is with the disciples. *Knowest thou*—The disciples meantime have been where they had chance to learn that the Pharisees were offended. They have been perhaps talking with the Pharisees themselves. They will bring intelligence of it to their Master How liable the disciples' minds were to

that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

13 But he answered and said, [n]Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone: [o]they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 [p]Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

16 And Jesus said, [q]Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that [r]whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But [s]those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 [t]For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

n John 15. 2; 1 Corinthians 3. 12, &c.——*o* Isaiah 9. 16; Malachi 2. 8; chapter 23. 16; Luke 6. 39. *p* Mark 7. 17.——*q* Chapter 16. 9; Mark 7. 18.

r 1 Corinthians 6. 13.——*s* Chapter 12. 34; James 3. 6.——*t* Genesis 6. 5; 8. 21; Proverbs 6. 14 Jeremiah 17. 9; Mark 7. 21.

be influenced by converse with Christ's opposers!

Pharisees were offended—Very likely; they came to beat, not to be beaten. They were going to strike the disciples, and thereby hit their Lord with the traditions of the elders. Our Lord beat them down with a piece of the decalogue. *This saying*—Both the saying to the Pharisees and its explanation to the multitude.

13. *Every plant*—Every doctrine. These traditions are a *plant* not planted by God, but by men, and they will be rooted up. Tradition can never stand as God's word, much less against God's word.

14. *Let them alone*—Leave them to their own inveterate folly. Their will is determined, and their purpose is fixed to ignore the truth and to deceive the people. *Blind lead... fall into the ditch*—A proverbial expression. Both seducer and seduced shall perish.

15. *Declare*—Explain or make clear. *Parable*—Or simile, by which the nature of moral impurity is illustrated.

16. *Are ye*—My own disciples. *Also*—That is, as well as the Pharisees. *Yet*—After all my example and instruction. *Without understanding*—Of the difference between physical uncleanness and moral defilement. The disciples have plainly been permitted by our Lord to neglect these washings. They have been doubtless many a time told that washing the body does not wash the soul. Still, when the precept in its avowed power is brought into direct collision with the doctrines of the teachers, they become a little confused, and need to have it stated outright and in full terms by the Master.

17. *Entereth in... mouth... draught*—The food passes the stomach and goes to the draught or privy without touching the soul to defile it.

18. *Proceed out of the mouth*—Our words particularly. *From the heart*—They proceed from the inward intention. Thereby not merely our *words* but our *actions*, and all that go from the heart, are included. A man is a voluntary *cause*, and is responsible for all his voluntary and intentional *effects*.

19. *Out of the heart*—The fountain of the moral intention and the moral action. Sinful action flows forth from a sinful nature. There lies back of the bad action a permanent badness of the disposition. The heart is therefore depraved. *Evil thoughts*—The word thoughts here refers to these internal reasonings and weighing for and against yielding to sin which precede its commission. The heart parleys with crime and fluctuates before it gives forth the act. Hence the phrase *evil thoughts*

20 These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

21 ¶ [u]Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a [v]woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But [w]he answered her not a word. And his disciples came

u Mark 7. 24.—*v* Psa. 45. 12.

w Psa. 28. 1; Lam. 3. 8.

designates the springs from which proceed the whole catalogue of sins enumerated in the verse. This catalogue follows nearly the order of the second table of the decalogue, beginning with the sixth commandment. *False witness*—This phrase includes *false testimony*, or *lying* of every kind. *Blasphemies*—Injurious expressions against God or man.

20. *These are the things*—Not all the things, but plentiful specimens of them. There is a strong analogy between physical and moral defilement, which forms the basis of much of the emblems and types of the Scripture system. But it is the pushing this analogy to a superstitious extent which produced the tradition about unwashen hands which our Lord here so forcibly condemns.

§ 67.—Healing of the Syrophenician Woman's Daughter—Other Miracles, 21–32.

21. *Then Jesus went thence*—So aggravated was the previous hostility of the Pharisees toward our Lord in consequence of his refutation just given, that he seems to have left Capernaum on account of their machinations. He was also at this time, since the death of John the Baptist, an object of notice by Herod Antipas. Unsafe, therefore, from the ruling powers of both Judea and Galilee, we suddenly find him on the margin of the Mediterranean. See note on xiv, 13. *Tyre and Sidon*—Lying upon the Mediterranean Sea, in the northwestern part of Judea.

Mark says that Jesus "entered into an house and would have no man know it; *but he could not be hid. For* a certain woman," etc. Yet it seems by Matthew's account that Jesus and his disciples were out of doors, on their way. The *for*, therefore, of Mark only qualifies the last clause, and introduces an instance or illustration of the fact that Jesus could not maintain his concealment.

22. *A woman of Canaan*—She was a Gentile, but she had heard of and seems to have believed in the Jewish Messiah. She is called by Mark a *Greek*, that is, a heathen by religion, and also a Syrophenician by birth. Phenicia was the Greek name of that strip of country inhabited by the ancient Canaanites, lying between the Lebanon range and the Mediterranean. That part of it which was included in the Roman province of Syria was called Syrophenicia. *Coasts*—Territories. *Thou Son of David*—She calls him by his Jewish name and pedigree. She does this to gain his attention and good-will. At the same time it shows that she had become acquainted with Jewish ideas and probably believed in them. *Daughter...devil*—Horrible misfortune! disease and insanity are terrible; but what must be the mother's feelings to find her child struggling under a demon's grasp? No wonder that when she hears that a man possessing divine power to relieve approaches, she comes to him and with all the energy of desperate prayer pursues him with her outcries.

23. *He answered her not a word*—The order of his mission is limited to the house of Israel. There is indeed misery in plenty in heathendom; and though for them he will make atonement before he returns to his Father, yet his miracles and his preaching belong to Israel. *Not a word*—He said no *unkind* word

and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, [x]I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to [y]dogs.

27 And she said, [z]Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee

[x] Chap. 10. 5, 6; Acts 3. 25, 26; 13. 46; Rom. 5. 8.
[y] Chap. 7. 6; Phil. 3. 2.
[z] Gen. 32. 10; Job 40. 4, 5; Ezek. 16. 63; Dan. 9. 18 Luke 7. 6, 7.

He did not repel her. He simply kept upon his way to pass her, as he must the great mass of the world lying in sin and misery. *Send her away*—They mean (though they are very careless in saying it) that he shall dismiss her *by performing her request.* But they would have our Lord merciful to her *in order to get rid of her.*

Crieth after us—Here in this foreign land, this woman is making us ridiculous by screaming at our heels! Besides, the disciples know that the very reason of being in that remote locality is to escape dangerous notoriety. Alas! how do men despise the excitement with which they do not sympathize! Many cannot endure the excitement of *prayer*, who are fond of the excitement of carousal.

24. *He answered*—To the disciples. The fact that our Lord gives this reason *to the disciples* shows that he is assigning the true cause of his actions. It is not, as some think, to draw out the woman's faith, that he declines to hear her prayer; but because his immediate mission is not to Gentile, but to Jew. *Sent*—All his actions are under the control of Him from whom he has received his commission; and the tenor of that commission limits him to Israel. *Lost sheep*—Such is the character of which the whole house of Israel consists. They are all lost sheep, and to them is he sent.

25. *Then came she*—During the conversation with the disciples, our Lord seems to have stopped his walk a moment; and the woman, who was before running behind him, improves the opportunity to place herself before him, and flinging herself at his feet pants forth this desperate ejaculation: "Lord, help me." "O dismiss these cold thoughts about thy mission; think of my misery; and have mercy, not so much on my daughter, as upon *me* in saving *her.*"

26. *It is not meet*—Not fitting. It is not in the order which God has established. *Children's bread...dogs*—The original is *little dogs;* so that with the contempt, there is a tenderness in the epithet. Yet our Lord begins to recognize in her a Gentile that may prove an Israelite indeed if fully tested. He therefore puts her in a most humble place, to see if she has an humble, though a Gentile heart.

27. *Truth, Lord*—Desperation almost makes the woman witty. To take your opponent's words and give them a turn against him is always a dexterous mode of mastering him. The woman admits the dismissing epithet, and proves that *it* entitles her to his mercy. "*Dog* is it I am? And the Jews my *masters?* Then, at least, let me have the crumb that mercy does not deny to the very *dog.*"

28. *O woman*—The Lord breaks forth in exclamation! He chooses to find himself overcome. Her faith takes her out as an exception to the whole Gentile world. She shall be as an Israelite. The very letter of her prayer shall be fulfilled. Mark says that when she returned home "she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed." *Faith*—Her *faith*

even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

29 [a]And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh [b]unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down here.

30 [c]And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they [d]glorified the God of Israel.

32 ¶ [e]Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, [f]I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

a Mark 7. 31.—*b* Chap. 4. 18.—*c* Isa. 35. 5, 6; chap. 11. 5; Luke 7. 22.

d Psalm 50. 15, 23; Mark 2. 12; Luke 7. 16.
e Mark 8. 1.—*f* Heb. 4. 15.

is not only peculiar in its greatness, but peculiar in this, that it obtains a blessing not for herself but for another. Or, to express it more truly, she obtains her blessing for herself upon another. It is a case of successful intercession. For her sake and through her fervent effectual prayer did the blessing light upon her offspring. And so a blessed thing it may be to be the child of the praying parent. And encouraged may every praying parent be to persevere in fervent prayer, for even the most hopeless case of sin or suffering of a child.

29. *Departed...thence...unto the sea of Galilee*—From the northwest to the northeastern part of Galilee. The probable reason of these sudden movements is given in note on verse 21. Our Lord seems to pass by Capernaum without a visit, as he had lately abruptly left there after the altercation with the Pharisees who came from Jerusalem to assault him. *Went up into a mountain*—A mountain range on the east side of Lake Gennesaret. It was in the dominions of Herod Philip. See note on xiv, 13. *Sat down there*—He seated himself like a rabbi to teach on the slope of the mountain.

30. *Great multitudes*—This was a region which he had before visited, and the people are all alive to avail themselves, even from great distances, of his power of healing. *Maimed*—Whose limbs were deformed from misfortunes at birth. *Cast them down*—Expressive of the humility of their submission.

31. *Glorified the God of Israel*—The same God who had performed such wonders for ancient Israel in the days of the Old Testament. They were feeling as if the days of wonders from his hand were now returning.

32. *Compassion on the multitude*—Some faith had they shown in attending his word and works. The tenderness of our Lord suggests all the pitiableness of their case. What they would have thought of had they framed a prayer for succour, he has thought of before them. So does our merciful Lord know what we need before we ask him; and we have need to ask him only in order to make ourselves in the right position to receive the spiritual blessings he would confer.

§ 69.—The Miracle of Feeding the Four Thousand, 33–39.

Skeptical critics have maintained that this narrative is a traditional repetition, by mistake, of the miracle of feeding the five thousand. That there was no oversight, however, on the part of the author of this Gospel is plain from xvi, 9, 10, where both accounts are alluded to in connection. But there is a minute but convincing argument for the genuineness of the two accounts thus given by Mr

33 [g]And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And [h]he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and [i]gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

g 2 Kings 4. 43.—*h* Chap. 14. 19.

i 1 Samuel 9. 13; Luke 22. 19.

Alford: "It is, that whereas the baskets in which the fragments were collected on the other occasion are called by all four evangelists κόφινοι, *cophini*, those used for that purpose after this miracle are, in both Matthew and Mark, σπυρίδες, *spurides*. And when our Lord refers to the two miracles, *the same distinction is observed;* a particularity which could not have arisen except as pointing to a matter of fact, that (whatever the distinction be, which is uncertain) different kinds of baskets were used on the two occasions."

But besides the differences in detail, such as the different number of the fed, and of the loaves and fishes, there are differences important in character. The first miraculous feeding was performed for the inhabitants who followed Jesus, and anticipated his debarkation from the western side of the lake. They meet Jesus in intense excitement at the shore, and the miracle takes place upon the plain of Butaiha, near the village of Bethsaida.

This second feeding takes place when Jesus is secreting himself from Herod Antipas. He rapidly and quietly passes to the coast northeast of the lake, out of the dominion of Herod; and it is in the country, probably, of the Decapolis that the miracle takes place. It is probably the multitudes from the eastern side who are sharers of the product of this miracle. And we cannot help thinking that there is some truth in the ancient opinion that they were mostly Gentiles; and thus an intimation is given that since the Jews have had their banquet at the table of God, the Gentiles too shall have a share. After the *former* miracle, the Lord sends forward his disciples by ship at night, and overtakes them before morning dawn by walking upon the sea. After the present miracle our Lord leaves the multitudes in their own regions, and departs to Magdala.

33. *Whence should we have...bread*—The wavering reply of the apostles evinces a recollection of the former miracle. They have not indeed the boldness to call for a miracle, as his mother Mary did at the wedding of Cana; and mother though she was, she received a check from her son and Lord. They do not say, If we are to feed this multitude your miraculous power must meet the expense. They only put a modest but suggestive *Whence?* Their eyes then watch every movement, we may suppose, of his lip and hand.

34. *How many loaves...?*—What is your present stock? God has in his ordinary providence furnished thus much; and these shall be a germ or basis for a special supply of enough for all. So God has given man the natural powers of reason and conscience, which serve as a basis for his gracious supernatural additions.

Twice, then, in the same general region of country, and under the same general necessity, did the Saviour supply "bread in the wilderness" to the needy multitudes who, far from their homes, stayed to listen to his word. This multitude thought not of making

39 [k]And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE [a]Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather: for the sky is red.

k Mark 8. 10.—*a* Chap. 12. 38; Mark 8. 11; Luke 11. 16; 12. 54–56; 1 Cor. 1. 22.

him a king; and he quietly departs with his disciples, crossing the Gennesaret.

39. *Magdala*—At present a poor village on the western side of the lake, a little north of Tiberias. Tracing his own course northward along the lake shore, Dr. Olin says: "We left Tiberias a few minutes before twelve o'clock. After one hour and twenty minutes a plain opened before us, extending several miles to the north and west. A miserable looking village of thirty or forty huts stands in the entrance; and we stopped to make some inquiries of the pale, sickly-looking inhabitants. This poor village, however, possesses a special historical interest. The people of whom we inquired its name called it Mejdal; and it is evident from the name, as well as from its position here, that it is the Magdala of the New Testament, and the Migdol of the Old."

It was the place from which Mary Magdalene received her appellation.

CHAPTER XVI.

§ 70.—A SIGN AGAIN ASKED, 1–12.

1. *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees*—These two sects were hostile to each other, but could be friends in order to resist the Saviour in concert. On this occasion they repeated the demand for a *sign* made on more than one occasion. See notes on Matt. xii, 38–40.

Tempting . . . him—Inasmuch as our Lord refused the *sign* formerly demanded, they now try again the same experiment. If he complies with their demands he will be such a Messiah as they desire. If he does not, they have an argument against him. *From heaven*—As being less likely to be a magical or juggling performance than a terrestrial miracle. Alford says: "In the Jewish superstition it was held that demons and false gods could give signs on earth, but only the true God from heaven."

Signs in the skies indeed there were. At his birth was the star. The angels announced from the skies his nativity. The dove from the skies descended upon him. Voices from heaven at different times acknowledged him Son of God. Finally, at his crucifixion darkness at midday and earthquake gave witness to him.

At a later date in Jewish history (about the year 136) a false messiah came and undertook to be just such a messiah as the Jews desired. He called himself Bar Cochevas, or son of a star, from the *star* prophesied by Balaam. He performed *signs* by legerdemain, gained thousands of followers, among whom were three of the greatest of rabbis. He raised an insurrection against the Roman government, and terrible slaughters ensued. After one of the most sanguinary wars in history, the rebellion was subdued in the blood of the impostor and his deluded followers.

It is a bloody messiah like this whose *sign* these Pharisees wished to see appear in the heavens. Miracles of mercy, sermons and parables, forgiveness of sin and reformation of life, were matters for which they had no taste. To have granted their request would have been to concede their notion.

2–5. Our Lord, in his answer, endeavours to reveal to these Jews their own gross state of mind. They can appreciate, to be sure, physical and glaring *signs* in the *heavens*. But there is a higher *moral heavens*, in which God hangs out his spiritual tokens, to which they are blind.

3 And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O *ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* [b]the signs of the times?

4 [c]A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. [d]And he left them, and departed.

5 And [e]when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 ¶ Then Jesus said unto them, [f]Take heed and beware of the [g]leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

b 1 Chron. 12. 32.——*c* Chap. 12. 39.——*d* Jonah 1. 17; Luke 11. 29.——*e* Mark 8. 14.——*f* Luke 12. 1.

g Exod. 12. 15, 19; Lev. 2. 11; 1 Cor. 5. 6, 8; Galatians 5. 9; 2 Timothy 2. 16, 17.

3. *Red*—The evening and the morning *redness* betokened opposite things, *fair* weather and *foul*. The visible sky has *signs* they can read. *Hypocrites*—Who pretend that it is only for want of proper evidence that you do not believe my mission, when one half the sagacity you use in regard to the weather would, with an honest heart, convince you that a greater than Jonah is here. There would be less skepticism if men's hearts were as *pure* as the evidences of religion are *clear*. *Signs of the times*—The evident approaches of the fulfilment of prophecy, and the tokens that society is going to destruction without a moral reformation, were the sad *signs* of these *times*. Were not Daniel's seventy weeks of years drawing to a close, at which time the Messiah was to appear? Was not the sceptre departing from Judah, at which time their predicted Shiloh was to come? Had not the harbinger of the Messiah appeared and awakened them all with his warnings? Were there no recollections how Herod, alarmed by a sign from the sky, summoned the Sanhedrim to inform him of the place of Messiah's birth? Was there not a general presentiment prevalent through the East that the great *One* was about to appear? Was there not now One who was, by their recorded pedigrees, of the line of David, proving by miracles that he was the Messiah of prophecy? Had they not themselves confessed that his miracles were such as no power less than the highest spiritual agent could perform?

4. *Sign of the prophet Jonas*—Our Lord here briefly refers them to his previous illustration of their request. Briefly, because they doubtless knew its farther exposition as previously given. *Departed*—Our Lord knew that their temper was now of the hostile and treacherous kind; and as he went to Tyre and Sidon to avoid their treachery in chapter xv, and thence to Decapolis to elude Herod, so now he evades these men by a rapid departure. Indeed, his movements through these two or three chapters are rapid, and distant from the seat of government, as if aware that the eye of the authorities of Herod Antipas was upon him. This debate took place at Magdala or thereabouts. Chap. xv, 39. It is implied by the word *departed* that he left that place and again crossed the lake to the east side; and his next named locality is Bethsaida Julias. Note on verse 13.

5. *Disciples were come to the other side*—Our Lord had already gone to the other side. He had now passed again from the government of Herod Antipas to that of Herod Philip.

6. *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees*—The disciples doubtless were often exposed to the influence of the conversations of the Pharisees and Sadducees when our Lord was not present. In chapter xv, 12–20, they had evidently come to our Lord under the influence of such a conversation. Our Lord's refusal to grant a *sign* at their demand, as well as his departure, gave perhaps an air of victory to these cavillers.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread.

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

9 [h] Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

10 [i] Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the [k] doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

h Chapter 14. 17; John 6. 9. *i* Chap. 15. 34.—*k* Acts 23. 8.

7. *Because we have taken no bread*—The uneasiness of the disciples at their oversight in not taking bread confused their minds and filled their thoughts, so that they had no expectation of the Lord's figurative meaning. This is not strange. They have a material bread to take care of; and the allegorical language of our Lord might easily take them unawares. Besides, as there has been very lately a severe contest between the Pharisees and our Lord, who knows what treachery the sellers of bread among the Pharisees may be guilty of? Perhaps our Lord may be warning us against a poison in the leaven.

8. *O ye of little faith*—By the grossness of their mistake our Lord intends to impress the lesson on their minds.

9. *Five thousand*—Our Lord reminds them of the miracles of bread to show that his thoughts were not obliged to be resting on natural supplies of bread.

10. *Four thousand*—It is plain, from the references in these two verses to the miracles of feeding both the four thousand and the five thousand, that they were intended to be narrated as two independent transactions.

12. *Doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees*—Their rejection of His miracles, their ascription of His mighty power to Satan, and their cavilling demands for a *sign* from heaven. These principles were very likely to infect the minds of the disciples with scepticism.

§ 73.—The Endowment of the Apostolic College with the Keys, 13–19.

Our Saviour's ministry has now drawn to its zenith. He has exhibited his character and laid his lessons before his disciples. He has trained them so that while the rest of the world is in wonder and doubt about him, expressing its various conjectures, they will be ready to confess him clearly and solidly to be the Christ. He has so impressed upon their minds his history and doctrine, that when he shall leave them, under the aid of the pentecostal spirit they will be able to found his kingdom and Church on earth. He now proceeds after solemn prayer to assemble them together and in a formal manner to require the common profession of faith; to lay them as a foundation for his Church, of which himself was the ground; to promise them the victory over the powers of hell; and to give them the apostolic *keys* by which, endowed with power from on high, they should be able to open and shut the doors of the Church, in such a way as should be ratified in heaven. After that, he dares fully open before them the prospect of his death and sufferings.

This, the opening of the Sixth Period, must therefore be considered as a most important turning point in our Lord's history. Thenceforward his is a *Ministry of Sorrow*. See Historical Synopsis.

13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, [1] Whom do men

[1] Mark 8. 27; Luke 9. 18.

13. *When Jesus came*—Jesus was now on the southeastern side of Lake Gennesaret. He moves on the east side, northward, and at Bethsaida Jesus cures a blind man. (Mark viii, 22–26.) Thence he moves up along the banks of the narrowing and rapid Jordan, toward its sources at the northeastern corner of the Holy Land. He passes Lake Merom, a scene of ancient battle, and arrives in the vicinity of Cesarea Philippi, the most northerly point, probably, at which he ever touched.

Cesarea Philippi stood upon the side of Mount Panium, from whose cliff the Jordan has its northeastern spring. The rock of this cliff was surmounted by a temple built in honour of Augustus Cesar. The ancient name of this city was Paneas, so called as being on or near ground sacred to the pagan deity Pan. It was not, as some say, identical with the ancient Laish, which, in fact, had its site four miles distant, and is now called El Kady. It was rebuilt by Herod Philip, and named Cesarea by him, in honour of the patron from whom he received his government, Tiberius Cesar. It was called Cesarea Philippi, or Philip's Cesarea, to distinguish it from Cesarea Palestina, which stood upon the Mediterranean shore. It was afterward named Neronias in honour of the cruel emperor Nero; but in due time both these names were disused, and its old name, softened into *Banias*, remains to the present day.

Coasts—Territories. See note on ii, 16.

The region about Cesarea Philippi was then rich and populous, and is now celebrated by travellers for its surpassing beauty. Stanley thus describes his approach to the mountain on whose side the town was built: "Over a carpet of turf, through trees of every variety of foliage, through parklike verdure, which casts a strangely beautiful interest over this last recess of Palestine, the pathway winds, and the snowy top of the mountain itself is gradually shut out from view by its increasing nearness. There is the rush of waters through deep thickets; and the ruins of an ancient town, not Canaanite but Roman, rise on the hill side; in its situation, in its exuberance of water, its olive groves, and its view over the distant plain," almost an Italian Tivoli in the recesses of Syria. Banias is now a Mohammedan town of some twenty huts, but the circuit of the ancient walls is easily distinguished.

It does not appear that our Lord really entered the city of Cesarea Philippi. That city was a favourite residence of Herod Philip; and that prince may at that time have been within it. Mark says that Jesus went into *the towns of Cesarea Philippi;* that is, its adjacent dependent villages.

Whom?—Our Lord now proceeds to lead forth the confession which is to form the basis of their apostolic character as the *foundation of the new Church after his departure.* There were in the apostolic history three stages. The *first* was that following their call, the *second* was after their trial mission, and the *third* after this inauguration. In the *first* stage they start with a simple faith in his Messiahship, without any very definite idea in what his Messiahship is to consist. In the *second* stage, they have, under the attacks of the enemies of Jesus, many a wavering doubt; and it is not until the present time that our Lord, who knows what is in man, perceives that they have a hardihood of faith that can stand the shock of his death, and maintain, firmly as so many rocks, when aided by the Pentecostal Spirit, the foundation of the Christian faith. As that time has now come, he proceeds to draw forth a full profession of that faith, and appoints them to be the apostolic rocks of the new dispensation.

Whom do men say—What is the result of my ministry? What saith the world, that has heard my words and seen my works, in regard to my nature?

say that I, the Son of man, am?

14 And they said, [m] Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, [n] Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: [o] for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but [p] my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That [q] thou art Peter, and [r] upon this rock I will build my church,

m Chap. 14. 2; Luke 9. 7-9.—*n* Chap. 14. 33; Mark 8. 29; Luke 9. 20; John 6. 69; 11. 27; Acts 8. 37; 9. 20; Heb. 1. 2, 5; 1 John 4. 15; 5. 5.

o Ephesians 2. 8.—*p* 1 Corinthians 2. 10 Galatians 1. 16.—*q* John 1. 42.—*r* Ephesians 2. 20; Revelations 21. 14.

Son of man—Our Lord's usual designation of himself, and usual with none but him. The question could, therefore, be not much different from asking, Whom do men say that I, Jesus, am?

14. *Some say*—They might have said, Some say thou art the agent of Beelzebub. But none but the few malignant Pharisees said that; and they could not indoctrinate the people with so dark a calumny. On the heart of the masses Jesus had at least left a reverent impression of himself.

Jeremias—This prophet was held by the Jews to be the greatest of the prophetic class.

15. *Whom say ye*—Now comes the important question for which the whole occasion is appointed. Observe, the question is *put to them all* and not to Peter alone. It is, "Whom say YE?" not whom sayest *thou?* The disciples as an entire body have, thus far, been concerned. As this question is put to them *all*, of course the answerer, Peter, is simply the spokesman or representative of them *all*. He is the foreman of the jury, who answers the Judge and pronounces the verdict for all the rest; and he receives an investiture from Christ for them all. See note on chap. iv, 18.

16. *Simon Peter answered*—As the *senior apostle*, and so, on the present occasion, the representative of the whole. This supposes a *prominence*, but not the *primacy* over the rest.

The Christ—The Messiah. *Son* not merely of man but of *God*. *The living God* is the source of all existence and life.

17. *Blessed art thou*—Highest of blessings, to be the confessor and apostle of the *Son of God*. *Bar-jonah*—Son of Jonah. Spoken simply as a matter of solemn emphasis. *Flesh and blood*—Mere *frail humanity*, whether of himself or others. Our Lord had already thanked his Father that while he hid these things from *the wise and prudent* he had revealed them unto *babes*. See note on xi, 25. No wisdom of man, therefore, but the guidance of God, had made him an apostle and revealed the Messiah to him.

18. *Thou art Peter*—With thy renewed apostleship (for it is indeed a new one) I give thee a renewed name. As Peter signifies *stone*, and as thou and thy fellow-disciples are to be the foundation stones of my new Church, I name thee forever by that symbolical title of *Peter*, that is, *stone*. *Upon this rock*—The material of which thou art composed, as the apostolic foundation stone. In the Syriac language, in which our Lord spoke, the word *Peter* and this word *rock* were doubtless the same word. But they were all as truly *stones, and made of rock*, as he. But as he alone spoke the verbal confession, so to him alone was addressed and belonged the verbal title which commemorated it. Indeed, they are expressly called stones, (Eph. ii, 20; Rev. xxi, 14,) though the word in the original, *lithos*, is a different

and [s]the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

[s] Job 38. 17; Psa. 9. 13; 107. 18; Isa. 38. 10.

19 [t]And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of

[t] Chapter 18. 18; John 20. 23.

without being a less expressive word than Petros.

The expression, *this rock* upon which *I will build my Church*, has received very different interpretations from the doctors of the Church in various ages. The first is the construction given by the Church of Rome, and made the basis of the enormous imposture of the papacy. It affirms that the rock is Peter individually, that the commission constituted him supreme apostle, with authority, inherited from him by the bishops of Rome. But

1. As may be shown, not Peter alone, but each apostle, was a *rock* and a recipient of the *keys*, and all were coequal in powers. 2. Were the authority conveyed to Peter alone and personally, it must still be shown that this personal prerogative was among the successional attributes conferred upon him. 3. That Peter was ever bishop of Rome is without historical foundation; and the pretense of a succession from him by the Romish bishop is a fable.

Some have made the word *rock* designate Christ himself. They hold it to be derogatory to Christ's dignity for there to be any other foundation stone of his Church than Christ himself. They hold that our Lord said: Thou art Peter, a stone, and upon this rock (pointing perhaps to himself) I will build my Church. But this is inconsistent with the laws of a natural interpretation. Others understand that the *confession* which Peter made was a *rock*. (Thou art a *stone*, and upon this rock of truth which thou hast confessed, and upon this faith which thou hast professed, will I build my Church.) But Biblical language always holds men, not truths, to be foundation stones. The rock is not the doctrine, nor the confession, but the *confessor*.

I understand that it is the apostle himself who is the rock; yet not as a man, nor as a private confessor of the Saviour's Messiahship, nor as Lord of the apostolic twelve, but as a specimen and representative of what all the twelve were. For the Church is said, Eph. ii, 20, (no doubt in allusion to this celebrated passage) to be built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. It is plain that the question which Peter answered was put to the whole twelve, and that he confessed for the whole twelve, and that the keys which are given in the nineteenth verse were given to the whole, (xviii, 18.) They were all Peters, or stones of the foundation, as well as he; only he, being the front stone of the pile, bore the inscription of the name of Peter, which essentially belonged to all. This image of a *rock*, as Stanley remarks, may have been suggested by the rock above the town, upon which stood the temple of Cesar Augustus. It is a limestone cliff, some eighty feet high, and from beneath it the streams of the Jordan issue.

Gates—The warlike habits of ancient nations required that all great cities should be girt with massy walls, able to resist the enginery of assault then in use. And as the *gates* would be special points of attack, they were fortified so as to be specially impregnable. And as through the gates the whole city went in and out, there were always the concourse and the crowd. There men resorted for news, for marketing, and for proclamations. The gates became structures with chambers, in which courts were held, legislation was performed, and negotiations with foreign nations transacted. Hence the word *gate* became a symbol of power and of empire The *gates* of death, the *gates* of hell, were the *powers* of death or hell. *Hell*, here, is in the original Hades. The word properly signifies *the invisible* state or place of departed spirits, both of the righteous and the wicked. In this sense it is opposed or antithetical to the state of the living. But in a stricter or more usual sense it stands opposed to *paradise*, and signifies the abode of the departed wicked, for which we have no other English word than *hell*. The gates

heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20 [u]Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

21 ¶ From that time forth began Jesus [v]to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

[u] Chapter 17. 9; Mark 8. 30; Luke 9. 21.

[v] Chap. 20. 17; Mark 8. 31; 9. 31; 10. 33; Luke 9. 22; 18. 31; 24. 6, 7.

of hell are therefore the infernal powers, who from their invisible stronghold manifest their visible hostility. The rock-built *Church* and the *gates of hades* are thence two opposing potencies. *Shall not prevail*—Shall not overpower. The battle may waver long and fearfully, but the rock-built fortress shall finally prove victorious.

19. *Keys*—The Church is as a *fortress*, or rather *temple*, built upon these twelve stones; and the temple has *keys*. The authority over the whole is conferred upon Peter, and through him on all the apostles, by bestowing upon him and them the keys. This is according to an ancient custom of surrendering the government of a city or fortress by yielding the keys. The ancient Oriental key usually bore not much resemblance to the artistic little metallic instrument which we mean by the word, and which Italian painters pictured in Peter's hands. It was a wooden apparatus, which would heavily lade a man's arm. Hence the language in Isaiah xxii, 22, which is a suitable parallel to these words of our Lord: "The key of the house of David will I *lay upon his shoulder;* so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open. *Bind...loose*—These words, perhaps, carry out the image of the keys. Doors and gates were in ancient times often fastened by tying instead of locking. Our Lord therefore here confers upon the twelve an inspired and miraculous authority and power to found and to govern his Church after his resurrection, by decisions which should be ratified in heaven. Yet the rabbins used the words *binding and loosing*, to signify affirming or denying a point of the law.

There is no proof whatever that this miraculous power of these twelve apostles ever descended to any successors. As ministers and preachers they have many successors; as apostles, none. Such was the inauguration of his apostolic college by our Saviour preparatory to his departure from the world. Having found them rocks *in faith*, he makes them *foundation rocks of his kingdom.* He is now prepared to open a new chapter of his own history. He is not to be a conquering Messiah, as even yet they may be imagining, but a *suffering Messiah!* He has given them a kingdom, but he is now himself to die.

§ 74.—Predictions of his own Sufferings and ultimate Coming to Judge the World, 20–28.

20. *Tell no man...the Christ*—At this difficult juncture none but himself could properly preach the Messiahship. See note on xvii, 9.

21. *From that time forth*—The *Ministry of sorrow* now commences. His apostolic rocks are firm enough now to bear the full announcement of those woes which had heretofore been but obscurely intimated.

Must go unto Jerusalem—Matthew's history has, thus far, scarce once found our Lord at Jerusalem. His is almost exclusively a Galilean gospel. But though the Saviour has mostly laboured in Galilee, he must suffer at Jerusalem; and thence the preaching of his name must properly go forth. There is the site of the Old Testament theocracy. There have the sacrifices of the law, and the blood of

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, [w]Satan: [x]thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24 ¶ [y]Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For [z]whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or [a]what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

w See 2 Sam. 19. 22.——*x* Rom. 8. 7.——*y* Chap. 10. 38; Mark 8. 34; Luke 9. 23; 4. 27; Acts 14. 22; 1 Thessalonians 3. 3; 2 Timothy 3. 12.——*z* Luke 17. 33; John 12. 25.——*a* Psalm 49. 7, 8.

the Old Testament atonements, shown forth his death for ages. And from there, the royal city of David, must go forth an announcement of the kingdom of the son of David to all the world.

22. *Peter took him*—Took him perhaps aside from the apostles for expostulation. Officiously affectionate, he will set our Lord right, and banish this dismal conception of death instead of royalty.

Be it far from thee, Lord—Be corrected, dear Lord. We were just talking of a *kingdom*, and now thou talkest of a *cross*.

23. *Get thee behind me, Satan*—Our Lord seems to call Peter Satan. Not quite so. But he recognizes a Satan speaking in the words that Peter utters. His own human nature would say, like Peter, "Far be the terrible suffering from thee." The same Satan had once tempted him in his own person to fall down and worship him, in order to gain the whole world; and that same Satan seems now to speak in Peter's voice. As he repelled Satan then, so he repels the same devil now that seconds Peter's words. *An offence*—A snare. See note on xviii, 7. *Those that be of men*—Is there not something prophetic in these words? The Church of Rome has claimed that her supremacy was predicted in the *rock* and the *keys*. But is it not the ambitious Peter who would have the kingdom without the cross, and who spake the things of man and not of God, which is the type of ambitious Rome?

24–28. It is a key to the interpretation of the four remaining verses of this paragraph, (which commentators have generally missed,) that the kingdom of verse 28 is the kingdom of verse 19. The meaning of the entire paragraph then is plain. This kingdom, now conferred under emblems of keys and binding and loosing, is a kingdom of suffering as well as of power. It is to be brought in by endurances and crosses for his sake as *king*, and under him as our final *judge* and rewarder at the judgment day, (ver. 27;) in order that he may come at his resurrection and establish on earth (ver. 28) his kingdom of grace "with power." So that verses 27 and 28 refer to very different events.

24. *If any man will come after me*—As a disciple following his master *Take up his cross*—See note on x, 38 *Follow me*—As a suffering servant of a suffering Lord.

25. *Save his life...lose.* See note on x, 39. The present paragraph, indeed, is in general a reiteration of the substance of that chapter—apostolic suffering, in view of a future reward, in order that Christ's kingdom may be established in the earth.

26. *Gain the whole world, and lose his own soul*—As Peter, in his preference for a worldly monarchy, would in fact do, and even persuade Jesus to do.

27 For [b]the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father [c]with his angels; [d]and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

28 Verily I say unto you, [e]There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

b Chap. 26. 64: Mark 8. 38; Luke 9. 26.——c Dan. 7. 10: Zech. 14. 5; 25. 31: Jude 14.——d Job 34. 11; Psalm 62. 12; Prov. 24. 12; Jeremiah 17. 10; 32. 19; Romans 2. 6; 1 Corinthians 3. 8; 2 Corinthians 5. 10; 1 Peter 1. 17; Revelation 2. 23; 22. 12. e Mark 9. 1; Luke 9. 27.

27. *For*—This particle shows that the verse which it introduces explains and enforces the consideration of the previous verses. To save one's life to gain the world with the loss of the soul, is a bad bargain, *for* the judgment day is coming. *Shall come*—From heaven at the end of the world. *In the glory of his Father...angels*—The same words describe the scenic splendour of his judgment advent in Matt. xxiv, 31. *Reward*—For every suffering there shall then be a compensation. In view of this *reward* at the judgment day, they were to toil and suffer for the consummation (described in the next verse) of Christ's kingdom on earth.

28. *Verily I say*—The accomplishment of the enterprise for which they toil and earn a martyr's *reward* is now stated. *Son of man coming*—Is parallel with x, 23; both are fulfilled at Christ's resurrection. As the Son of man would *be come* before the apostles had *gone over the cities of Israel*, so these same apostles *standing here* should *see the Son of man coming*. *Some standing here* would refer to the eleven apostles, excluding Judas, who did not behold Christ in his resurrection *power*. These eleven were only *some*, not all, of those *standing here;* for it appears by Mark viii, 34, that Jesus had *called the people* to be present at this discourse *with his disciples*. The declaration that they should *see* the Son of man at that time is too plainly literal for any fulfilment at the destruction of Jerusalem.

Instead of the phrase "Son of man coming in his kingdom," Saint Mark has, (chapter ix, 1:) "Until they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Luke has: "Until they see the kingdom of God." We may fairly suppose that our Lord used the expressions given both by Matthew and Mark, which include that of Luke. It would then be that *some there standing should not taste of death until they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom; and the kingdom itself come with power*. These two phrases express the commencing and continuative points of the same thing. The *coming in his kingdom* was at his resurrection; the coming of *the kingdom of God with power* was the consequent miraculous establishment of Christianity on earth. The latest surviving apostles saw both of these before their death. Our Lord's "*coming in his kingdom*," was when he came from Paradise to resume his body, now glorified, and was invested, as prophetically seen by Daniel, (vii, 13–14,) with "a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." He then declared that "ALL POWER" was given into his hands, and commissioned his disciples to go and *disciple all nations*. The keys of the kingdom of heaven were put into their hands, and they were to open the doors to the believers of all peoples. Compare on chap. xxviii, 18.

It has been objected that the "*phrase shall not taste of death until*," implies a considerable distance of time. This objection is correct, and it refutes the application of the passage, which some commentators have made, to the *transfiguration*, and even its exclusive application to the *resurrection* of the Lord. But of the whole then present, including the people, none but the eleven disciples saw the *resurrection*, which was the *Son of man coming in his kingdom;* and some of these same eleven lived until they *saw the kingdom of God come with power* by the complete miraculous establishment of Christianity in

CHAPTER XVII.

AND [a] after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart,

2 And was transfigured before them: and [b] his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3 And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

a Mark 9. 2; Luke 9. 28.

b Exod. 34. 29; Acts 26. 13; Rev. 1. 13, 17; 10. 1.

the earth, as well as the disappearance of the old dispensation before it. To this interpretation, therefore, of both phrases taken together, the implied length of time is no objection.

CHAPTER XVII.

§ 75.—THE TRANSFIGURATION, 1–12.

1. *After six days*—Luke says "about eight days;" that is, after the conversation mentioned in the last chapter. Luke counts and Matthew omits the first and last days. *Taketh...bringeth them.* He selects and leads them. *Peter, James, and John*—The *rock* and the two *sons of thunder.* They were the *select three* of several occasions. Their traits of character rendered them capable of special revelations and manifestations. (Mark v, 37; Matt. xxvi, 37; Luke viii, 51.) *Into a high mountain*—It was formerly supposed to be Tabor, in Galilee; but as our Lord on coming down immediately joins the other disciples, and seems not to have left the region of Cesarea Philippi for Galilee until after the curing of the demoniac, (Mark ix, 30,) so distant a mountain as Tabor can hardly have been the scene. Hermon, called Great Hermon, northeast of Gennesaret, is now considered by scholars as the more probable locality.

"It is impossible to look up from the plain to the towering peaks of Hermon, almost the only mountain which deserves the name in Palestine, and not be struck with its appropriateness to the scene. That magnificent height, mingling with all the views of Northern Palestine, from Shechem upwards, though often alluded to as the northern barrier of the Holy Land, is connected with no historical event in the Old or New Testament. Yet this fact of its rising high above all the other hills of Palestine, and of its setting the last limit to the wanderings of Him who was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, concurs with the supposition which the words of the Scripture narrative inevitably force upon us. High up on its southern slopes there must be many a point where the disciples could be taken 'apart by themselves.' Even the transient comparison of the celestial splendour with the snow, where alone it could be seen in Palestine, should not, perhaps, be wholly overlooked."—*Stanley.*

2. *Transfigured*—Changed in appearance. Luke tells us that our Lord was praying when the glory began. *Before them*—As they stood lost in wonder at the phenomenon. It was no transient glimpse. It was a full steady splendour. *His face did shine*—Compare this with this description of the resurrection glory, when "his countenance was like lightning and raiment white as snow." Compare also his appearance to John, Rev. i, 3–16. *Raiment*—Luke says it was "white and glistering." Mark, "shining exceeding white as snow." That is, his *person* was *shining* and his *apparel* was *white.*

3. *There appeared...Moses and Elias*—Alford well remarks: "The two who appeared to them were the representatives of the *law* and the *prophets;* both had been removed from this world in a mysterious manner—the one without death, the other by death indeed, but so that his body followed not the lot of the bodies of all; both, like the Greater One with whom they spoke, had endured that supernatural fast of forty days and nights; both had been on the holy mount in the visions of God. And now they came endowed with glorified bodies, before the rest of the dead, to hold converse with the Lord on that sublime event which had been the

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, [c] it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

[c] Exodus 33. 18; Psalm 4. 6; Isaiah 33. 17.
[d] 2 Peter 1. 17.

5 [d] While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, [e] This is my beloved Son, [f] in whom I am well pleased; [g] hear ye him.

[e] Chap. 3. 17; Mark 1. 11; Luke 3. 22.—[f] Isa. 42. 1.
[g] Deut. 18. 15, 19; Acts 3. 22, 23.

great central subject of all their teachings, and solemnly to consign into His hands once and for all, in a symbolical and glorious representation, their delegated and expiring power. And then follows the divine Voice, as at the Baptism, commanding, however, here, in addition, the *sole hearing and obedience* of Him whose power and glory were thus testified."

How, it is asked, did the disciples recognize these celebrated personages? And some have answered that our Lord may have subsequently informed them. But it appears by verse 4 that Peter knew them at the time. The disciples may have learned their identity by the conversation; or, more probably still, the same elevation of spirit by which they were able to see them at all enabled them to know, as by intuition, who they were. Probably the risen saints, after the crucifixion, were known in the same way.

4. *Good for us to be here*—It was not a moment of terror but of bliss when Peter spoke this. Amid paradisaic company, and in an atmosphere of paradise, even amid this mountain forest something of the elevation of paradise fills his soul. *Three tabernacles*—Three tents, booths, or camps. Peter does not say palaces, although he would have held palaces, whether of cedar, marble, or solid gold, none too good for such residents. But the rugged and woody sides of snowy Hermon afforded no implements for the building of such structures, and he proposes tabernacles

Perhaps he intended a tabernacle not unlike that of Moses in the wilderness; the true purport of which was to be, as it were, the dwelling for the Shekinah, or divine presence. He will have these divine ones not disappear and go back to heaven or paradise. They shall remain there and make it a constant paradise. And there, rather than on Moriah, the temple-mount, shall be the divine presence.

Peter does not propose more than three tabernacles, though six persons are present. The three glorified ones are to be the residents, and for each an apostle for a servant.

The word tabernacle is derived from the Latin word *taberna*, a shop or shed. The *tabernacle* of Moses in the wilderness was a building of rectangular figure, about forty-five feet long, fifteen broad, and fifteen high, so constructed as to be taken down, transferred on the march, and again set up. It was a movable temple for God, which was enlarged upon the grandest scale upon a similar model, and completed in the temple of Solomon.

5. *A bright cloud*—Literally, *a cloud of light*. *Overshadowed them*—Where the *cloud* was made of *light*, the *shadow* must be a *radiance*. *Them*—The former lustre described in verse 2 belonged to Jesus alone. The others were dim in the comparison. But the "cloud of light" suffuses them all with its glory. *A voice out of the cloud*—The voice, namely, of God, the Father Almighty. This seems to show that the cloud was the Shekinah, or *divine presence*. It was the same, perhaps, which filled the temple at the dedication by Solomon. It dwelt in the ancient temple and the tabernacle. *This is my beloved Son*—As the lustre had been most glorious on him alone, so the voice testifies to him alone. The servants are unnoticed by it, the *Son* alone is named. *Hear ye him*—Hear not *them*, but *him*. God spake in former times by the prophets,

6 [h]And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and [1]touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, [j]Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, [k]Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

[h] 2 Peter 1. 17, 18.—[i] Daniel 8. 18; 9. 21; 10. 10, 16, 18; Rev. 1. 17.

[j] Chap. 16. 20; Mark 8. 30; 9. 9.—[k] Mal. 4. 5; chap. 11. 14; Mark 9. 11.

but now he speaks by his Son, Heb. i, 1. Moses has passed away, and the prophets have ceased; and one in whom the law and the prophets meet has now appeared. How much this scene impressed Peter is evident from his own words, (2 Peter i, 16–18,) written long years afterwards: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."

6. *They fell on their face*—The lustre of the Saviour's presence had only made them happy; but the splendour of the Shekinah, and the voice from its excellent glory, filled them with tremor. So Daniel, (viii, 17,) and so John, fell before the Saviour himself, Rev. i, 17. This was not simply fear, but the power of the divine voice subduing the power of soul and body.

7. *Jesus came and touched them... be not afraid*—So the same Saviour touched John in the Apocalypse, (chapter i, 17.) He "laid his right hand upon him, saying unto him, Fear not."

9. *Vision*—Or *sight*. The word does not intimate that it was not a reality. *Tell the vision to no man, until...risen from the dead*—Just so the Lord in the last chapter forbade them to tell any one that he was the Christ. See our comment on xvi, 20. It was not until they had beheld all the scenes of his death and resurrection, and been empowered by the Spirit from on high, that they were competent to preach the Messiah *as he is*. Silence and discipline were their present duty. How could they properly preach a crucified and risen Saviour, when they were resolutely opposed to his death, (xvi, 20,) and, according to Mark, they questioned what the rising from the dead might mean? They had, indeed, preached in the earlier part of his ministry. But they had only preached repentance because the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

Had they preached the Messiah now they would hardly have held him forth as a dying Redeemer. And had they preached him as a glorious Messiah, superior to Moses and Elias, as set forth in his transfiguration, the Jewish authorities would have held them guilty of treason.

10. *Why then say the scribes*—The word *then* seems to imply something previously said in their conversation, contradictory to this opinion of the scribes that Elias should first come. This transient appearance was not a coming at all commensurate with the views of the scribes. What foundation then have the scribes, and how is their view reconcilable with the facts?

The Jews still, in accordance with their interpretation of Malachi, expect the coming of Elias as the forerunner of their Messiah, and pray for his appearance in their synagogue worship. They hold that, since his translation, Elias invisibly revisits the world per-

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall [l] first come, and [l] restore all things.

12 [m] But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but [n] have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise [o] shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13 [p] Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

l Mal. 4. 6; Luke 1. 16, 17; Acts 3. 21.
m Chap. 11. 14; Mark 9. 12, 13.
n Chapter 14. 3, 10.—*o* Chapter 16. 21.
p Chapter 11. 14.

petually. They believe him present at circumcisions; and a seat is provided at the right hand of the child, which he is supposed to occupy. It is therefore not so much for his coming that they pray as for his *manifestation*.

11. *Elias truly shall first come*—That is, such is the doctrine of ancient prophecy that thus it shall be. Obviously our Lord speaks of what was future to the prophets who predicted the coming of Elias. He evidently does not mean, as some understand him, that Elias is now to come before Christ's second advent. *Restore all things*—Such shall be his office and mission, however unsuccessful in the result. To *restore all things* is to bring the things of the kingdom from their confusion to a state of restored order before Messiah came. He is a restorer, to set the house to rights before the arrival of a great visitor.

12. *Elias is come*—We are not to look for him as future; we are not to look upon this transient vision of Elias as the fulfilment of the prophecy; and yet Elias *is* truly *come*.

13. *John the Baptist*—Hence the spirit of prophecy had, by the lips of Malachi, simply designated John by the name of the prophet of whom he was the antitype. Just so Christ is called our *passover* by the appropriation to him of the name which belonged to his type. See notes on Matt. iii, 1; xi, 2.

We may, in conclusion, remark that the narrative of *the transfiguration* is good proof of the immortality of the soul, and of an intermediate state of the soul between death and judgment. Moses is dead, yet Moses still lives. For Moses appeared living to the apostles on the mount of transfiguration.

In the scene of the Transfiguration we may find the following purposes:

1. It presented a visible exhibition of Christ as in his glorious kingdom just at hand, namely, at his resurrection. It presented to his apostles a purer as well as sublime view of his royalty; elevating their thoughts above the notion of a mere earthly conqueror and king.

It presented him as arrayed in his royal robes, when he should be fully invested by God the Father Almighty, in consequence of his sufferings, with a name which is above every name. It was, therefore, a confirmation and pledge (though not a fulfilment) of the utterance which he had given, just one week before, that even some of their own congregation should with living eyes behold him coming in his kingdom. Matt. xvi, 28.

2. It presented a predictive view of Christ which should be recalled to mind after his resurrection, both to confirm to his disciples the reality of that event, and remind them not only of its verbal predictions from the Saviour's lips, but of this visible prediction presented to their eyes. Both glories, namely of the transfiguration and of the resurrection, were the same. And when these three disciples should see the ascending Saviour, they would well remember that they had before seen him in the same splendour on the mount.

3. It presented a signal specimen of our own glorious resurrection in the image of the risen Christ. There is not to be the creation of a new body, as there was not in the transfiguration, by either the bringing into existence new particles of substance, or by the additional accretion of other particles already existing.

14 ¶ [q]And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a *certain* man, kneelin down to him, and saying,

q Mark 9. 14; Luke 9. 37.

Our Lord's body went into its resurrection or glorified state, and subsided again, without any exchange of its particles of substance. Its substance was, for the time, endowed with higher phenomenal properties. So, chemically, the charcoal becomes a diamond by simply a new arrangement, without any change of identity of the particles.

So the same body that dies, particle for particle and substance for substance, will rise again; yet changed, or transfigured, in so far as it is invested with new properties of glory and of fitness for a heavenly world.

4. It presented Christ as the founder of the new heavenly kingdom, as harmonizing with, though superior to Moses, the founder of the old dispensation. and to Elias, the head of the prophetic order. All the illustrious of past ages stand diminished and humbled before the now glorious Son of man, this transcendent Head of the human race. Adam before the fall was his most nearly equal type; yet still inferior because he fell. Hence, when the apostles afterward went through Jerusalem, and beheld the pomp of the old ceremonial, and the pride of its priesthood, they could call to mind this lesson, and contemn the whole, as nullified by reason of the glory that excelleth.

5. It presents to the Christian Church a symbol of the exalted nature of Jesus, as the second unfallen Adam, as the glorifying restorer of man to his primeval glory; as invested with the robe of Divinity, exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, to conform all his own to his own final glorious likeness. The Gospel of Matthew mostly presents Christ in his laborious and suffering conditions; teaching sublimely and working miraculously, indeed, yet struggling with the trials, and exhibiting the simplicity of mere humanity. But this one scene in Matthew raises Jesus above all human level, and furnishes a full basis for all the glories which the Epistles of Paul and the Revelation of St. John ascribe to his transcendent Person.

6. The Jews, during some part of their history, conceived a theory that there were to be two Messiahs, a glorious and a suffering one. They found in Scripture propnecy such varying accounts and descriptions of the great One to come, some exhibiting him in triumph and splendour, and others showing him in humiliation and death, that they could explain the discrepancy only on the supposition of two different persons. The one they called Messiah, the Son of David, and the other Messiah, the Son of Joseph. Now Jesus, by this manifestation of his own glory, showed both to be united in himself. He was both the suffering and the glorious Messiah. He was the Son of man and the Son of God. He descended to the humblest depths of our nature to bring us to its utmost heights.

§ 76.—Casting out of a Dumb and Deaf Spirit, 14–23.

As Moses, when he came down from the mount of God, found that his people had in his absence turned to idolatry and vice, so our Saviour, on coming from the mount of transfiguration, found that his disciples in his absence had neglected prayer and fasting, and become spiritually weak, and had rendered themselves liable to the taunts of adversaries and the rebukes of the Lord. Great is the contrast between the exaltation of the mount and this humiliation on the low level of the earth.

14. *Come to the multitude*—The preceding conversation, from verse 9, transpired as they descended the hill. Mark (chap. ix) tells us that this was on the second day after the transfiguration. The Lord found his disciples under question by the scribes for a failure to dispossess a demoniac. As the multitude saw our Lord himself approaching

15 Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they [r] could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus [s] rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, [t] If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove:

[r] 2 Kings 4. 29; Acts 19. 15, 16.
[s] Acts 16. 18; 19. 13.

[t] Chap. 21. 21; Mark 11. 23; Luke 17. 6; 1 Cor. 12. 9; 13. 2.

they ran to him with great earnestness, as if believing that he would be able to accomplish the work. They salute our Lord with joyful reverence. The Lord demands of the scribes why they are thus questioning his disciples; when the father of the demoniac child comes forth and states his case.

15. *Lunatic*—Insane, and deprived by the evil spirit of his reasoning faculties. Mark gives a vivid description of the power of the demon and the sufferings of the victim. The terrible convulsions to which he had been subjected had rent and torn him "from a child."

16. *Disciples . . . could not cure him*—The disciples had perhaps often performed the miracle of casting out demons; but upon this occasion, either from a special weakness of their own or a special strength of the demon, they failed.

17. *Faithless and perverse generation*—The *scribes*, who stood by cavilling at the failure; the *people*, who had brought the devil into such power over themselves and children by their sins; and the *disciples*, whose weak faith subjected the cause of God to ridicule, are all a part of this faithless and perverse generation, and all have a share in this rebuke of our Lord. He had just come from the celestial transfiguration on the mount; and how terrible was the transition to the company of devils, demoniacs, depraved unbelievers and weak disciples. *Suffer you*—Moses, in Numbers xx, 10, complained, and he was therein sinful: for no sinner may thus rebuke his fellow. But with Christ the pure, not merely the gainsayings of the wicked, but the shortcomings of humanity, were a true source of profound suffering.

19. *Apart*—They were doubtless ashamed to discuss this question before the world.

20. *Because of your unbelief*—During the absence of their Lord, the disciples seem to have become as it were *secularized*. See introduction to the section. *Faith as a grain of mustard seed*—That is, *in size;* in contrast with the size of the mountain it is able to remove. *This mountain*—This faith, be it remembered, supposes a concurrence between God and man. On the part of God a mission or duty assigned to the man, for which the power of faith is granted; and without this the true faith is impossible. On the part of man there must be *exercised* all the granted faith-power, by which he puts forth the act, or pursues the course which is opened in the way of duty before him. When these two things combine, it is literally true that *anything is possible.* If the man's mission be to remove the Andes into the Pacific it can be done.

and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

22 ¶ [u]And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

u Chap. 16. 21; 20. 17; Mark 8. 31; 9. 30, 31; 10. 33; Luke 9. 22, 44; 18. 31; 24. 6, 7.

If there be no duty to it, there can be no true faith for it; and the attempt to do it would not be *faith* but rash *self-will*. God gives no man faith wherewith to play miraculous pranks. On the other hand, if there be the duty and the God-given power of faith, and yet it be not exercised with the full strength of heart and the firm trust in God which knows the impossibility will be done, no miracle shall follow. This the disciples *had not*, even to a mustard seed's amount; and a mustard seed's amount could have as easily accomplished its mission as my hand moves a pen. There doubtless lives many a Christian now with faith sufficient to remove real material mountains, if God had any such work for him to do. Yet it may be safely presumed that our Lord used the word *mountain* as well as the *mustard seed* by way of figure. He may have used it as Isaiah xl, 4, prophesies that "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be brought low." Or as Zechariah iv, 7, declares that the "great mountain shall disappear before Zerubbabel."

21. *This kind*—The word *kind* may mean the entire species of evil spirits, and then our Lord would mean to say that to cast out evil spirits requires prayer and fasting. Or it may mean that this *special kind of evil spirits* which infested this child requires special faith, or special effort to give effect to that faith. The latter is the more obvious, and therefore the more probable meaning. That there are various grades of spirits of evil is not improbable in itself; and the idea is sustained by many proofs. The very fact that Beelzebub is *prince* of devils, shows this. Mark, by his glowing description of the fierceness both of this demon and of the demons at Gadara, evidently means to convey the idea that there are demons of more than ordinary fierceness. Matthew tells us (xii, 45) of one who took "seven other spirits more wicked than himself." And Paul (Ephesians vi, 12) evidently describes divers orders of evil. We may safely conclude, therefore, that our Lord meant to say that this sort of demon required more than ordinary spiritual vigour to expel him. And here we have a solemn intimation that we have all, nigh unto us, spiritual foes of various power, whose force can be overcome by the vigorous use of the means of training our spiritual strength.

22. *While they abode in Galilee*—The miracle and conversation of the last paragraph plainly took place not far from the mount of transfiguration; which was in the vicinity of Cesarea Philippi. Thence, according to Mark ix, 30, they crossed over Gennesaret to Galilee, where the present scene transpired. *Into the hands of men*—Though he was the Son of man, and the model of humanity, it was fatal for him to be betrayed into the *hands of men*. Our Lord first broached the subject of his death at the scene of the apostolic inauguration in chap. xvi, 21 And (as in our comment on that passage we have noted) so unexpected a turn after delivering to them the kingdom, struck them with consternation. He now, after his transfiguration, reveals the same sad assurance. Matthew says *they were exceeding sorry*. Luke says that our Saviour told them, *Let these sayings sink down into your ears*, if not into their understandings; and he adds: *They understood not this saying, and it was hid from them that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him*.

24 ¶ And [v]when they were come to Capernaum, they that received [1]tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find [2]a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

[v] Mark 9. 33.—1 Gr. *didrachmon*, equal to one shilling and three pence sterling, or thirty cents.

See Exodus 30. 13; 38. 26.—2 Gr. *stater*, equal to two shillings and six pence sterling, or sixty cents.

§ 78.—Miracle of Coin in the Fish's Mouth, 24–27.

24. *They...tribute money*—Not the Roman tax-gatherers, for they would not have proposed the payment as a matter of question. This tribute money was a contribution of the Jews to the maintenance of the temple services. It was enjoined by God, through Moses, (Exod. xxx, 11–16,) and amounted (Exod. xxxviii, 26) to a bekah, or half a shekel. *Doth not your master pay the didrachms?* is the question in the Greek. From which it appears that the Greek didrachm or double drachm was equivalent to a bekah or half shekel. That is, four drachms made a shekel. See note on verse 27. *Came to Peter*—Their awe of our Lord did not permit them to approach him with the matter.

25. *He saith, Yes*—Peter is here, perhaps, as often, a little too forward. He wishes to speak favourably for his Master. *Jesus prevented him*—Introduced the matter as soon as Peter *came into the house*, and before the latter had time to do so.

26. *Then are the children free*—Kings do not take tribute of their own sons. Now of the temple God is king, and I am his Son. Why then, Peter, did you so far forget my Sonship as to pledge me to become a tribute-payer? Peter had but lately confessed his Lord in the most solemn style, at Cesarea Philippi, as *Son of the living God.* He had but a few days previously heard God's voice, on the mount of transfiguration, proclaim Jesus as his *beloved Son.* Why then should God's Son pay tribute for his own house? Nevertheless our Lord did not avail himself of this divine exemption.

27. *Offend them*—Put a snare or entrapment in their way, by which they should fall into the supposition that I depreciate God's house. See note on xviii, 7. *Go thou to the sea*—As I am Son of the King of all the universe, the earth is my patrimony, and the sea is my treasury. Go and draw upon it. Take a coin from the fish's mouth and pay thy contribution and mine. *Piece of money*—In Greek a *stater.* This, being a half shekel for each of the two, must have been current for a shekel, which was about sixty-two cents. See note on verse 24.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT [a] the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little

a Mark 9. 33; Luke 9. 46; 22. 24.

CHAPTER XVIII.

§ 79.—Contention of Disciples—Peace of the Church, 1–35.

This chapter forms a complete and beautiful discourse on the unity and peace of Christ's Church, about to be formed. It is to be viewed as a whole, and each of the parts is to be construed in reference to the scope of the whole. The discourse itself, as uttered, must have stood in striking contrast with the ambitious visions and the emulous strife of the apostles, by the occurrence of which it was suggested.

A debate having arisen as to the primacy in the Messiah's kingdom, our Lord, avoiding all harsh rebuke of their strife, commences his doctrine on the subject by introducing a symbol calculated to soothe their minds to gentler feeling. A child is called; old enough to walk, yet young enough to be taken in a seemly way into his arms. And as the child cheerfully accepts its docile place, and knows no desire of rule or lordship, so must the heirs of the kingdom come down to that temper which is best designated by the term *childlike*. 1–4.

Passing then from the natural child to the child by grace, our Lord illustrates, in the most solemn language, the awful sin of *offending;* that is, of causing Christ's true *child* to fall and *perish*. 5–9. The value of such a child is illustrated by the fact that for him angels watch, because Christ died for him, and in his mercy sought for him as for a lost sheep. 10–14. Next the *kingdom* is a family and the little ones are *brethren*. Our Lord, therefore, lays down to them the mode of dealing with the trespassing brother; and he assures all such as comply in temper and act with his law on the subject, that the decisions they make in the Church below are ratified in the Church above. 15–18. And this same divine sanction of the acts, so in spirit and in form done by a whole Church, is bestowed upon the action of the smallest plural number; for that smallest number of his true little ones, acting in the true spirit, is blessed with his true presence. He then lays down a law of unlimited forgiveness of all true penitence, which he illustrates by a parable of an unforgiving one. 21–35.

This chapter is a perfect programme for a peaceful Church.

The Emblem of Humility, 1–6.

1. *At the same time*—Literally at that season; namely, at Capernaum, shortly after the miracle of the coin in the fish's mouth.

Saying, Who is the greatest—In regard to the propounding of this question, there is an apparent discrepancy between the evangelists, which we may lay before our readers in full, as an illustrative specimen of the nature of such discrepancies, and the proper modes of dealing with them.

Matthew.	Mark, ix 33.	Luke ix, 46, 47.
Came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child.	And being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace: for they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, etc. And he took a child.	Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart took a child.

At first glance we should imagine an irreconcilable difference, and error of detail. But a closer inspection will show that each evangelist gives different stages of the same transaction. Luke tells of the first rising of the dispute, which probably took place on the way, from fishing in the lake, to Caper-

hild unto him, and set him in he midst of them.

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, [b]Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

4 [c]Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little

[b] Psa. 131. 2; chap. 19. 14; Mark 10. 14; Luke 18. 16; 1 Cor. 14. 20; 1 Pet. 2. 2.——[c] Chap. 20. 27; 23. 11.

baum; and then he omits the rest until Jesus placed the child before them.

Mark commences after they had come nto the house, when Jesus questioned them, and they were silent; he omits what followed until the Lord called all together and placed the child before them.

Matthew tells us what occurred after our Lord questioned them, and they were silent for shame. The disciples, on reflecting that our Lord evidently knew their debate, ingenuously come and lay the question before him. Our Lord then procures the child, and furnishes an answer in full, in regard to the discussion for the pre-eminence. xviii, 1.

From this example the unpracticed reader may easily see how the evangelists supplement each other; and how what at first seems to be irreconcilable difficulty becomes, on farther examination, perfectly consistent proof that fact is the basis of all.

The greatest in the kingdom of heaven—The giving of the keys to Peter had not produced the idea in the apostle's mind that he was thereby nominated head of their body, or prime minister, vizier, or general in the divine kingdom. Among the disciples it was still an unsettled question which should be primate; it might be one of our Lord's blood relations; it might be the beloved John, or the senior Peter. Our Lord's discourse decides that it will be neither.

2. *Called a little child*—There is an interesting traditon that this was St. Ignatius, one of the most celebrated fathers of the early Church.

3. *Be converted, and become as little children*—Conversion generally implies our being *turned*, by the influence of truth and the Divine Spirit, with the consenting act of our own will, from our course as sinners to the ways of religion. But here, perhaps, it more specially signifies the being brought to renounce the disposition to seek pre-eminence or power over our fellows, especially in the Church. This was now the besetting sin of the disciples, of which it was their momentous duty to repent, and, by the aid of divine grace, be *turned* or *converted*. In this work God does the *converting;* man does the repenting and the *turning* to the new course. *Justification* is simply the pardon of our sins through the merit of Christ. Thereby we are treated by God as if we were *just*, or innocent of sin past. *Regeneration*, or the *being born again*, is the bestowment of those new feelings of love to God and his cause, by which we become in heart and soul children of God; and we are thence adopted into his family. *Sanctification* is the power and disposition, more or less complete, to live free from sin, to overcome temptation, and to dwell in the uninterrupted enjoyment of God's smile. *Become as little children*—Our Lord selects a child at the age when conscious artifice and the desire of superiority are not yet developed, and the lesson was doubtless illustrated by the docility with which the child came. The feeling of dependence on the parent is as yet complete. It has no plans of ambition, no thought of being superior to another. Now grace must take our full-grown nature and lay these turbulent passions as completely at rest as in the bosom of that serene child.

Shall not enter the kingdom—So far from keeping the *keys of the kingdom of heaven* you shall not enter it yourselves. Ye shall not enter that kingdom below, and by consequence shall fail of the kingdom above.

4. *Humble himself as this little child*—It is to meek and quiet humility that our Saviour would have them converted. Thus it is that even the Chris-

child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And [d] whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

6 [e] But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 ¶ Woe unto the world because of offences! for [f] it must

d Chap. 10. 42; Luke 9. 48.—*e* Mark 9. 42; Luke 17. 1, 2.—*f* Luke 17. 1; 1 Cor. 11. 19.

tian often needs converting to the abandonment of errors and false habits and to the fuller possession of Christian graces

Greatest in the kingdom of heaven—Hence there are degrees in the happiness of the blessed in heaven.

5. *Whoso shall receive one such little child*—Not the actual child but the spiritual child, whom grace has made. *Receiveth me*—In receiving him who is my spiritual image. For our Lord here passes from the symbol to the thing symbolized, from the child by nature to the child by grace.

6. *Shall offend*—The word *offend*, at the present day, signifies to irritate or make angry. It here, however, signifies *to cause to sin or to apostatize.* It is to make one offended with Christ. Hence, as on the one hand he who receives, or cherishes, the humble Christian receives Christ himself; so he who causes the humble Christian to lose his religion and his soul, renders himself liable to unutterable condemnation. See note on verse 7.

A millstone were hanged about his neck...drowned—The millstone here specified was not the domestic handstone, turned by women, in grinding. See note on xxiv, 41. Besides this there was among the Jews the heavy sort, of which the upper stone was turned by the ass, and hence in the original called the *ass-millstone. Hanged about his neck* to secure his sinking. *In the depth of the sea*—In the main centre of the sea. The capital punishments among the Jews were either burning, stoning, strangling, or beheading. Drowning was and is prevalent among other Eastern nations, and it existed even among the Greeks. This was said to be the punishment for the crime of sacrilege, to which the crime of seducing a soul from Christ is analogous. The intensity of the depth is described as the image of the utter ruin which his crime deserves. It of course implies that he perishes under the divine displeasure, and receives from God the depth of punishment of which the human penalty is so apt an image. Indeed, the whole must be figurative. Our Lord could not mean that in any case a civil or state punishment would be inflicted upon the man who should cause a Christian to fall into sin.

THE WOE OF OFFENCES, 7–9.

7. *Woe unto the world because of offences*—Let it be noted that the word offences here does not signify merely *sins*, or *provocations to anger.* It means causes which produce sins or apostacies in men. Nor does the word *stumbling-blocks*, adopted by some commentators, convey a correct image or idea. The word is derived from a Greek term, which originally signified the *trap-stick* to which the bait was fixed, by touching which the animal sprung the trap and so was caught. Hence it signifies any moral *enticement* by which a person is *entrapped* into error, sin, or apostacy. *Snare* or *entrapment* is the true moral idea. In this world these temptations and entrapments must come. But woe to the man who is the intentional author of them. He who broaches deceitful infidelities or heresies, by which men are seduced from the paths of truth and well-doing, is performing the devil's work, and must reap the devil's reward. See commentary on Matthew v, 19, 20. Since errors and temptations are sure to come, and so liable to ruin both their author and their victim, do thou

needs be that offences come; but [g] woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 [h] Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into [i] everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven [j] their angels do always [k] behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

g Chap. 26. 24.——*h* Chap. 5. 29, 30; Mark 9. 43, 45. Isaiah 33. 14; Mark 9. 48; 2 Thessalonians 1. 8, 9; Revelation 14. 10.——*i* Psalm 34. 7; Zechariah 13. 7; Hebrews 1. 14.——*k* Esther I. 14; Luke I. 19.

sever them from thee, though as dear as the *hand* or the *eye*.

It must needs be that offences come—Since men are free, and being free will offend, it must follow that offences will meet us in our experiences. God does not slay men, nor deprive them of their free nature, nor limit its natural free action in its allotted range, in order to prevent the sin. For it is a fundamental law of probation, that character shall have full scope freely to develop itself; so that responsibility can justly exist, penalty can be justified, and rewardable free desert can arise. God reserves to himself an absolute control over the laws of nature; he locates men in existence, confers or limits their capabilities, and foreseeing what they will thus freely do, he regulates all his own plans so as to educe the highest good.

PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP, 10–14.

10. *One of these little ones*—Those whom my grace has made to be as *little children*. *Despise*—Undervalue them. Esteem it to be a small matter to destroy their souls. *Their angels*

Of the existence of angels the Bible furnishes abundant proof. See note on chap. i, 20. That these angels, as messengers of God, do minister to his people, Paul expressly affirms, by asking: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. i, 14. And so the Psalmist says: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." xxxiv, 7. That individual Christians have particular angels is clearly implied by the words of Peter's friends: "It is his angel." Acts xii, 15. And so the little ones here mentioned have "*their angels*." These angels are said to *behold the face* of God. This, if not taken from the fact that the prime ministers and favourites of kings are familiar with the face of their royal masters, as having free access to them, is at least an analogous fact. So in Esther i, 14: "Next unto king Ahasuerus were the seven princes of Persia and Media, which *saw the king's face*." And so in Luke i, 19: "I am Gabriel that *stand in the presence of God*." The doctrine is, then, that of every humble Christian the angel is God's favourite and presence-angel. A glorious reason why we should not despise them! We presume not to say how far this is figure, and how far it is literal fact. That angels did often, by special mission, minister visibly to the saints of the Old Testament and the New, is matter of sacred history. That their salvation, through Christ, is matter of interest to angels we are told in 1 Peter i, 12. Still the idea that every Christian's special angel enjoys the direct view of the Divine Being, as a special favourite in heaven, may be rather more safely viewed as a beautiful symbol borrowed from earthly courts. It may represent that favour which the merits of Christ procure for the redeemed before God. Christ is as a host of angels in their behalf, before the face of God.

11 [l] For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12 [m] How think ye? if a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he [n] rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

15 ¶ Moreover [o] if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go

l Luke 9. 56; 19. 10; John 3. 17; 12. 47. *m* Luke 15. 4.——*n* Isa. 53. 11; 62. 5; Jer. 32. 37, 41; Micah 7. 18.——*o* Leviticus 19. 17; Luke 17. 3. *p* James 5. 20; 1 Peter 3. 1.

The idea of Mr. Watson, that a person's *angel* is his disembodied spirit, seems not well founded. The friends of Peter (Acts xii, 15) imagined the person at the gate to be *his angel*, from the popular notion that a man's guardian angel or genius in person resembled himself.

11. *For the Son...is come to save... lost*—And this is the *reason* why their representatives are admitted to the face of God. *Lost*—Such was their condition in themselves. And their *lost* condition is a reason why they are in danger of being despised. But it was for them that the Son of man came.

Having in the last verse described the Christian as originally *lost*, our Saviour proceeds from that very *word* to enhance our view of the value of his soul. Just because he was *lost*, the Son of God came to seek and save him. Had he not been a *lost one* he would have concentrated less interest upon himself. And this principle the Saviour illustrates by the case of the *lost sheep*, who by his loss gains to himself all the interest of the owner, who to save him leaves the rest of the flock comparatively uncared for. And how shall we dare to be careless of the salvation of those on whom Christ lavishes such interest? The parable is given more fully in Luke xv, 4–6. *Leave the ninety and nine...into the mountains*—The true rendering is, *Doth he not leave the ninety and nine upon the mountains.* That is upon the mountain pasture, where flocks were often richly fed.

14. *One of these little ones should perish*—Our Lord through this whole passage intimates that it is possible for those who have become the little ones of Christ, at last to *perish*. If it were in fact a law of the divine administration that they could not apostatize, much of the language here used is deceptive. It is indeed replied that all those warnings are the means of preventing the apostacies, which are rendered impossible by them. But it is very unnatural to say that God prevents that which he has determined shall never take place, by continually representing it as possible. This would be to make it impossible by continually declaring it possible.

MODE OF DEALING WITH OFFENDERS, 15–20.

15. *Moreover*—Jesus still continues, in strict sequence after the preceding, to lay down laws for the body of his childlike followers. How is one of them to deal with another who trespasses against him? From this it is to be seen that our Lord does not teach that the Christian is one who has no regard to his own right, or who sits passively under any trespass whatever. Yet in our dealing with such a trespasser, the leading object should be *to gain our brother*. To restore him to a right state of mind, and thereby to bring back the former state of childlike harmony, as well as save his soul, is the first aim. If you succeed in these results, the highest objects will be gained all round. If he prove obstinate, the result will be that you

and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, [p] thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in [q] the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* to the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a [r] heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, [s] Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

19 [t] Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on

[p] Deut. 17. 6; 19. 15; John 8. 17; 2 Cor. 13. 1; Hebrews 10. 28.—[q] Romans 16. 17; 1. Cor. 5. 9; 2 Thess. 3. 6, 14; 2 John 10.—[s] Chapter 16. 19; John 20. 23; 1 Cor. 5. 4.—[t] Chap. 5. 24.

and the Church will be righted, and he will not only be condemned by the Church below, but the sentence will be ratified by God in heaven.

If thy brother—If in this community of Christ's little ones there shall be one who trespasses against thee, who art also one of the same childlike brotherhood. *Tell him his fault*—Not so much to gain thy own rights as to gain his soul and thy peace and the purity and peace of the Church. *Alone*—So that there shall be no motive of pride to induce him to make out a good case before a witness. *Thou hast gained thy brother*—Thou hast prevented one of Christ's little ones from perishing. Thou hast delivered thy own soul. Thou hast vindicated the purity of the Church.

We append Mr. Wesley's notes on this passage:

"*If thy brother*—Any who is a member of the same religious community: *Sin against thee*, 1. *Go and reprove him alone*—If it may be, in person; if that cannot so well be done, by thy messenger, or in writing. Observe, our Lord gives no liberty to omit this, or to exchange it for either of the following steps. If this do not succeed, 2. *Take with thee one or two more*—Men whom he esteems or loves, who may then confirm and enforce what thou sayest; and afterward, if need require, bear witness of what was spoken. If even this does not succeed, then, and not before, 3. *Tell it to the* elders of the *Church*—Lay the whole matter open before those who watch over your and his soul. If all this avail not, have no farther intercourse with him, only such as thou hast with heathens. *Let him be to thee as the heathen*—To whom thou still owest earnest good will, and all the offices of humanity."

18. *Shall be bound in heaven*—As you are but executing the laws of Christ, the great Head of the Church, even in expelling from his family an obstinate and impenitent trespasser, so he in heaven will ratify your sentence.

We here see that Christ has authorized his Church to exist, and to exercise judicial powers in order to secure her purity and peace. And if she proceeds in the performance of these duties in temper and process as he prescribes, she but executes his laws, and she will be sustained by God himself. But the divine ratification follows only when the whole procedure is required by and accords with the spirit and law of Christ.

The binding and loosing, therefore, bestowed upon Peter belong to all collectively. It belongs to no popo or potentate. It resides in the body of the Church.

19. *If two*—Let it be remembered that our Lord is still stating the blessed results of preserving the true childlike place of his little ones, as depicted in the previous discourse. He has just told them how God will ratify their collective proceedings, in accordance with Christ's laws as a Church. He now proceeds to tell them that it requires not the assembly of a whole Church to obtain the gifts of God. The

earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, [u]it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where [v]two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? [w]till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: [x]but, Until seventy times seven.

23 ¶ Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him [y]to be sold, and his wife,

[u] 1 John 3. 22; 5. 14.—[v] John 20. 19.
[w] Luke 17. 4.

[x] Chap. 6. 14; Mark 11. 25; Col. 3. 13.
[y] 2 Kings 4. 1; Neh. 5. 8.

smallest number shall suffice to obtain the fulfillment of prayer. *As touching anything*—That is, as touching anything which could be obtained even by the largest number. The fewness of the numbers shall be no bar to the answer of their prayers. *It shall be done for them*—That is, it shall be done for them in accordance with the usual laws of God's kingdom of grace and nature. If the prayer be of that faith which God's laws of prayer require; if the faith be such as God's Spirit hath empowered, and be by us co-operatively exercised. It is the purpose of the present verse not to state under what conditions prayer shall be heard, or how extensive the range of fulfilled prayer; but to encourage even the smallest number who shall gather together for prayer, that their fewness is no bar to the proper answer from God.

20. *For where two or three*—Thus does the Saviour for all ages encourage the smallest meeting of his followers. If there be two, lo, there shall be a third! If there be the faith-offered prayer, it shall be heard.

21. *Peter...said...how oft*—Peter perceives that a law of tenderer dealing is to prevail in the Church than exists in the synagogue. The Jewish limit of forgiveness was thrice and no more.

22. *Seventy times seven*—This may seem a maxim of impracticable morality; but the duty of such a succession of pardons is founded upon the supposition of the offender's sincere repentance, as a condition, and the absence of any danger from his machinations. Doubtless one would endeavour in some way to remove the liability to such repeated backslidings and necessities for forgiveness, before the full number above named had arrived. Yet the rule lays down that *in no case do we retain resentment toward a sincere penitent.* And thus we have a striking parallel to the state of things between God and ourselves as continually sinning and repenting.

GOSPEL LAW OF FORGIVENESS ILLUSTRATED BY THE PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT, 21–35.

This parable enforces the rule just laid down by our Lord to Peter. It draws a contrast between God's patient forgiveness and man's unpitying cruelty. It warns us of the terrible penalty of incurring God's justice by our merciless dealing with our fellow-beings.

23. *Kingdom of heaven*—God's administration of justice, under the Messiah's reign. *King*—the symbol here of God, who is king of the universe. *Servants*—His officers of government; perhaps here the collectors of his revenue.

25. *Sold*—The Roman law as well as the Jewish allowed the sale of a debtor. By Jewish law the servitude would last but six years.

and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and [1]worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him a hundred [2]pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. $15.

29 And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow

1 Or, *besought him.*—2 Gr. *denarion*, equal to seven and a half pence sterling, or fifteen cents.

26. *Pay thee all*—Man can pay God nothing. Yet, through Christ, he accepts our surrender of all, and forgives. See verse 34.

28. *Went out*—From his Lord's presence, to inflict the severity. This sets the contrast in a more aggravating light. Fresh from the mercy of his Lord, he *goes forth* to inflict cruelty upon his fellow. So do men. They are, indeed, often at the same moment, spared of God and unsparing of others.

A hundred pence—He owed his Lord ten thousand talents; some ten or fifteen million dollars! He could not forgive a hundred pence, about fifteen dollars! This reminds us how much more God does forgive us than we can forgive others. Oglethorpe, governor of Georgia, said, in a passion, to Mr. Wesley: "That vile servant of mine misbehaves, though he knows I never forgive." "Then," said Mr. Wesley, "I hope you never sin." The beautiful reproof overcame the angry governor.

Took him by the throat—Literally, *grasping, he choked him.* The plaintiff in a Roman suit customarily seized the defendant and drew him to the court. The present prosecutor performs the act with a merciless violence.

30. *Till he should pay the debt*—Until with nothing he should pay fifteen millions of dollars—that is, for evermore; for it can scarce be doubted that this is the very implication of our Lord. He puts the amount intentionally large, to show the immensity of our liability to God's account. He then expresses the duration of the imprisonment by the expressive words *until he should pay the debt.* It seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that our Lord meant to teach that for the unforgiven man there is no possibility of ever exhausting the penalty of the law.

31. *Fellow servants...very sorry*—They were *sorry*, but God was *wroth.* God's servants grieve over their fellow's sins; but vengeance belongeth to God. Even in expulsion from the visible Church, their true feeling is grief and love for the excommunicated; the act being done truly for his salvation. *Told unto their Lord*—God's saints are forever laying the sins of men before him in confessory prayer. But God's own omniscience is forever taking evidence of man's sins.

servant, [y] even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 [z] So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

y Luke 6. 35, 36; Ephesians 4. 32; Colossians 3. 13.—z Proverbs 21. 13; chapter 6. 12; 7. 2;

34. *Tormentors*—Not jailors only, but inflicters of chastisements. For criminals in prison were often condemned to scourging. *Pay all*—See on verse 30. Of course it was impossible for the bankrupt in prison to pay his fifteen million dollars.

The king, it must be observed, imprisons him for the debt which he had at first forgiven. The old forgiven sin of the apostate sinner springs up anew and condemns him. A man is finally punished for all the sins of his life. It helps him not one jot that at one time he was pardoned, but rather aggravates his case.

35. *So*—On the same principle of retribution. If we forgive not others, God will not forgive us. *From your hearts*—In mercy to ourselves we must turn the resentment out from our inmost *hearts*, that our own hearts may be abodes of peace and love. To this rule we consent every time we repeat the Lord's prayer. Surely the law of forgiveness must prevail in the kingdom of love. Judgment without mercy is for him that shows no mercy.

CHAPTER XIX.

§ 103.—JESUS, HAVING LEFT GALILEE, IN PEREA, DISCUSSES THE LAW OF MARRIAGE, 1–12.

1. *He departed from Galilee*—He left Galilee for the last time before his crucifixion. It had been the main scene of his ministry. He was hence sometimes called "the prophet of Galilee." Even for centuries after, the Christians were called, by Jews and Pagans, GALILEANS. When the celebrated Julian, the apostate, was providentially slain in the midst of his efforts to destroy Christianity, he exclaimed with his expiring breath: "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke have been called, specially, the Galilean Gospels, because their scene is mostly in Galilee, and their subject the ministry of our Lord to that section. On the other hand, John's has been called the Judean Gospel, because its scene is mostly in Judea, especially in Jerusalem. *Came...Judea beyond Jordan*—No part of Judea proper lay beyond, that is, *east* of the Jordan. But this phrase of Matthew is intended to cover the whole extent of our Lord's following ministry in both Judea and Perea. So Mark x, 1, is strictly to be rendered: *He cometh into the territories of Judea and beyond the Jordan.* That is, after leaving Galilee, his ministry was in Judea and Perea. Before he went to Perea, *beyond Jordan*, he visited Jerusalem, where most of the transactions of his ministry in John's Gospel took place.

Nor does Matthew here probably give the earliest transactions even in Perea, as will appear by consulting the Historical Synopsis. Between our Lord's leaving Galilee and the ensuing discussion with the Pharisees, the interval was near six months.

2. *Great multitudes followed him*—As he itinerated in Perea.

3. *The Pharisees also came*—The Pharisees as well as the multitudes. The former to cavil, and the latter to be

CHAPTER XIX.

AND it came to pass, [a] *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan;

2 [b] And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.

3 ¶ The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and

Mark 11. 26; James 2. 13.—a Mark 10. 1; John 10. 40. —b Chapter 12. 15.

saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, [c]that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female,

5 And said, [d]For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and [e]they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore [f]God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

[c] Gen. 1. 27; 5. 2; Mal. 2. 15.—[d] Gen. 2. 24; Mark 10. 5–9; Eph. 5. 31.

[e] 1 Cor. 6. 16; 7. 2.—[f] Mal. 2. 14; Rom. 7. 2; 1 Cor. 7. 10; Eph. 5. 28; Heb. 13. 4.

ealed. *Tempting him*—Trying him to ee if they cannot get him into a difficulty. The point was one about which here was a hot partisan dispute, and he object was to involve our Lord in ts quarrel. *For every cause*—The point s this: In Deut. xxiv, 1, Moses gives o a man permission to dismiss his wife by granting her a bill of divorce or discharge, certifying that she is no longer his wife, if she "find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found uncleanness in her." The followers of Rabbi Hillel interpreted this to mean that a man might dismiss his wife whenever he pleased, for the very slightest offence, or for no offence at all, if he found some woman that pleased him more. But the followers of Rabbi Schammai held that the uncleanness meant unchasteness, and so forbid divorce for any other cause. If these Pharisees now can make our Lord commit himself upon this point, they hope to involve him in the feud with one party or the other.

4. *He answered*—Our Lord's answer really coincides with neither party. Schammai is indeed in the right in maintaining the stricter view of marriage obligation. His views are founded in absolute right. But then he is wrong in maintaining that the letter of the Mosaic law does maintain the highest strictness of the divine right on this subject. From the hardness of their hearts Moses did permit to the Jews, though not enjoin, a practice which was not absolutely right. A truly pure man could not avail himself of the permission. *Have ye not read*—Our Lord here quotes the book of Genesis as a divine authority. We thus prove the Old Testament by the New. If Christ was the Son of God Moses was the servant of God. If Christ's words had a divine authority, then Moses was also inspired. *Made them male and female*—He made the race male and female, with the divine intention that marriage should exist. And by still maintaining the race as divided into two sexes, he shows that marriage is a permanent and natural institution. And as he made one for one, and no more, so the marriage of a single man with a single woman is a law of the race. And since, by some mysterious law, the two sexes are perpetually preserved in an approximate equality in point of number, it is plain that the permanent marriage of one man with one woman is the permanent and universal law of nature. Polygamy, as well as capricious divorce, is a violation of natural law.

5. *Leave father and mother*—The tie of man and wife is stronger than that of parent and child. Hence, as the latter maintains its tie upon the heart during life, so the former should be indissoluble.

6. *One flesh*—As in Adam before the creation of Eve the twain were *one*, so now, by marriage, the oneness is restored. They are two halves of one whole, forming *one person*. Yet, however much we may talk of their oneness, they are not *one soul*. They have an eternal separateness of individuality, by which they may be eternally separated in future destiny. Hence they are indeed *one flesh*, but not one soul. *Let not man put asunder*—It cannot be done in any case without crime, except by death

7 They say unto him, [g] Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

9 [h] And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

10 ¶ His disciples say unto him, [i] If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

11 But he said unto them, [j] All *men* cannot receive this say-

g Deuteronomy 24. 1; chapter 5. 31; Mark 10. 4. *h* Chapter 5. 32; Mark 10. 11; Luke 16. 18; Romans 7. 3; 1 Corinthians 7. 10, 11.—*i* Proverbs 21. 19. *j* 1 Corinthians 7. 2, 7, 9, 17.

Our Lord in this answer sides with neither party, but rises above them both. He does not say, with Schammai, that the letter of Moses's law allowed no divorce but for adultery. Nor does he, with Hillel, affirm that divorce is allowable for every or any cause. He maintains that, upon the foundation of original creation, divorce for any other cause than adultery is wrong, and only permitted by Moses to prevent greater wrong.

8. *Because of the hardness of your hearts*—Because the rigidness of the moral law, if enforced by civil law, would be by you made an occasion of still greater wrong. You would have murdered your wives to be rid of them. *Suffered you*—He did not command you. And he who availed himself of the permission was none the less guilty of sin. He was not indeed amenable to Moses, but he was still amenable to God

9. *Except it be for fornication*—Our Lord here indicates no new law. He does not even restore the old one. He simply *declares* what has always been the law of God. Moses, in his civil code, declined to enforce the strictness of the moral law. Unlawful intercourse with any other person breaks the marriage tie. The criminal has deserted forever the marriage partner, and has become unfit for further association. Impure and outcast, the guilty being can never again enter a pure and lawful marriage covenant.

The orderly family is the foundation of the orderly society. Wherever marriage is lightly esteemed there is great danger that every tie will become loose. Unless the law be strong and strict enough to silence and suppress the roving imagination and roving desire, and to settle completely all thoughts of breaking or overstepping the sacred limit, disorder, licentiousness, and moral anarchy commence. A sensual tone pervades the life. And it is a universal law that where sexual license prevails, lawlessness of every other kind prevails. Lust and cruelty ever go together.

10. *Not good to marry*—The apostles' opinion seems to have been on the side of Hillel. It was probably accordant with the doctrine, or at least ordinary practice of that wicked age. The apostles therefore speak under the influence of their habitual impressions. So indissoluble a union with one woman they thought to be in any way intolerable. Better no marriage at all. And yet how fully experience shows that the age of strict marriage is the age of every quiet and healthful virtue. Such an institute stays at once a thousand irregularities of life. When the law of marriage banishes beforehand all thought of separation and transgression, the whole train of lower feelings become tranquilized and dismissed, and room is made for thoughts of other than sexual matters.

11. *Receive this saying*—Namely, the saying that *it is not good to marry* under so strict a law. The marriage law is both a divine and a natural institute. It was founded by God at the creation, and it is secured by the very elements of man's nature. If there be

ing, save *they* to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and [k] there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

k 1 Corinthians 7. 32, 34; 9. 5, 15.
l Mark 10. 13; Luke 18. 15.

any exception to the universality of the matrimonial necessity and duty, it is with a rare few. *Given*—*Given* by natural constitution, by misfortune, or by specially divine duty and qualification.

12. *For*—Our Lord proceeds now to specify three classes to whom it is given not to marry. To the first it is given by a peculiarity of nature; to the second by the cruelty of man; to the third by a divine duty and qualification. *Eunuchs*—The word eunuch signifies a *couch-guard;* and it designates a class of men who, in the Oriental countries, are subjected to a cruel degradation, and kept by their masters to guard the females of their harems. It is used here by our Lord to designate all persons who live entirely pure from the other sex. *So born*—Born of a constitution by which marriage is not desired. *Made eunuchs of men*—By barbarous violence. *Made themselves eunuchs*—By perfect chastity of mind and body. There are some (like Bishop Asbury) who, giving themselves up wholly to the ministry, or to religious study or devotion, exempt themselves for all or a part of their lives from the entanglements of life, that they may serve God more intensely.

Worst of all is the method of the Church of Rome, which enforces upon a whole class the duty of celibacy, regardless of natural power or constitution; and which binds others, by forced and perpetual vows, to the restraint for which no gift has qualified them. The results are cruelly and shamefully demoralizing.

13 ¶ [l] Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples [m] rebuked them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for [n] of such is the kingdom of heaven.

15 And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

m Chapter 16. 22; Luke 9. 49, 50.
n Chapter 18. 3.

§ 104.—CHILDREN BLESSED BY CHRIST, 13–15.

It is with great propriety that immediately after our Saviour has settled the law of marriage under the Christian dispensation, he should also assign the place of children in the Christian Church. This passage surely is not given for the purpose of showing that Christ was personally fond of children, but of showing that the child is no more to be excluded from the Church of the New Testament than from that of the Old.

13. *Were there brought unto him little children*—They were so young, not only as to be brought, but to be taken by the Saviour in his arms. *The disciples rebuked them*—The children were doubtless brought by the affection of the parents, who thus showed their faith in him, not only for themselves but for their offspring. So the faith of the Syrophenician woman brought a miracle of mercy upon her daughter.

14. *Suffer little children*—Our Lord does not merely say, suffer *these* children, but suffer all little children to come unto me. *Of such*—Of children and of childlike souls. For the adult man must become childlike to be fit for the kingdom of heaven.

Our Lord did not here baptize these children; for Christian baptism was not freely used until after his resurrection. But he does declare why they are proper subjects of baptism, namely, because *they are* subjects of the kingdom of heaven. And we are expressly told that "except a man be born of water"

16 ¶ °And behold, one came and said unto him, ᵖGood Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* ᵠnone good but one, *that is*, God: but if thou wilt enter

°Mark 10. 17; Luke 18. 18.—ᵖLuke 10. 25.

ᵠ1 Sam. 2. 2; Psa. 52. 1; James 1. 17.

as well as "of spirit" he is not fully and formally recognized as in that kingdom. In other words, he who is an internal subject of that kingdom needs baptism to constitute him an external member. If he be an internal member of that kingdom he is a proper subject of baptism. Our Lord here declares that infants are internal members of this kingdom; therefore, we infer, they are proper subjects of baptism.

In relation to the moral condition of infants, Mr. Watson says:

"We are bound to conclude that, in some sense, 'the kingdom of heaven' is composed of them; they are its subjects, and partakers of its blessings. That this kingdom signifies the spiritual kingdom of Christ upon earth, and also that glorious reign of God over redeemed and glorified men in a future world, are points not to be disputed; and the words of our Lord, if they relate to one, must relate to both. If little children are the subjects of his spiritual kingdom on earth, then, until the moment that by actual sin they bring personal condemnation upon themselves, they remain heirs of the kingdom of eternal glory; and if they become the subjects of the latter by dying, then a previous vital relation must have existed on earth between them and Christ as their Redeemer and Sanctifier; or else we must assign the sanctification of the nature of man, which even in infants is fallen and corrupt, to a future state, which is contrary to the Scriptures."

§ 105.—The Rich Young Man, 16–22.

16. *And behold, one came*—The case of the young man is here brought in to show that he who would be saved must be ready to give up all for Christ in the fullest sense of the words; and that he who cannot do this is deceived in supposing that he has so kept God's law as to be thereby saved. The conversation that follows shows that he who *gives up all for Christ*, will be no loser, but an infinite gainer, 27–30. The parable that follows (xx, 1–16,) shows that even he who does *give up all for Christ* will be saved, not *by his works*, but *by grace*. Let this connection be observed and traced, and the meaning of the whole will become more clear and striking.

Our Lord, as appears by Mark, had just *come forth* from the house where he had blessed the children, *into the way*, where this rich young *ruler*, as Luke calls him, (that is, ruler of the synagogue,) who had perhaps been waiting, came *running and kneeling*. His rapid movement indicated his earnest feeling; his kneeling indicated his reverence. *Good Master*—This was a new and a very studied title by which to address our Lord. Others had called him *Lord* and *Son of David;* but he is a noble Jew, who must give a polite address without quite admitting that he is addressing the Messiah. *What good thing*—He calculates to do something which will earn heaven. He will accomplish it by some bold stroke of righteousness, some grand supererogation, if he can find out what it is to be. He has kept the decalogue until he is tired of so tame a righteousness. If this *good Master* can inform him by what method he can pay for and justly deserve salvation, he is ready to bid for it. Try him with any task, and see if he will fail!

17. *Why callest thou me good?*—The young man had used the word *good* twice in his question; once to designate Jesus, and once to designate his own performance. Our Lord first proceeds to raise his own contemplations to a higher standard of goodness than he has in his mind. Perhaps he will then see that to talk of compensating God, by his good doings, for the infinite bliss of heaven, is folly.

Why callest thou me good?—Had the

into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, [r]Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 [s]Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, [t]Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, [u]go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me.

r Exod. 20. 13; Deut. 5. 17.——*s* Chap. 15. 4. *t* Lev. 19. 18; chap. 22. 39; Rom. 13. 9; Gal. 5. 14; James 2. 8.——*u* Chap. 6. 20; Luke 12. 33; 16. 9; Acts 2. 45; 4. 34, 35; 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19.

young rich ruler really believed Jesus to be Lord of all, our Lord would not have said this; for never did he refuse any homage offered him, however high. This passage can then be by no means considered as in any degree denying the supreme divinity of the Saviour. On the contrary, it is saying to the young man, If you call me good you should admit me to be God.

18. *He saith unto him, Which?*—The young man can hardly believe that this new teacher would refer him back to the old ten commandments. He has kept them, as he imagines, until they have grown commonplace. At the same time a sense of the insufficiency of his own righteousness does not allow him ease. He has no full sense of peace with God. He wishes some new prescription, by which he may feel that he is a sure heir of eternal life. *Jesus said*—Our Lord gives a few specimens, to intimate that it is just no more than the original decalogue, to which he is referred.

20. *What lack I yet?*—From this teacher the young man hopes to receive other instructions that will assure him of his safety, and so give him peace; or some instruction how he may supply his deficiency.

21. *Be perfect*—If thou wilt lack nothing, but have all things necessary to complete thy salvation, give up all for Christ. Our Lord has now brought him to just the right test. The young man wished a high standard of righteousness; our Saviour has presented it. He wished to be saved by works; our Saviour has shown him the way of faith. He truly thought he was ready for any task; our Saviour has undeceived him. He expected that he should be able to earn heaven by the nobleness of his performance; our Lord shows him that there is a price infinitely below the value of heaven which he is not willing to pay. Henceforth let no one dream that he can offer any price of righteousness that shall merit eternal life. Let him not go about asking what good thing he shall do to become an heir of heaven. Let him simply throw himself by faith upon God for salvation, and trust in the Saviour he hath sent.

Sell that thou hast—Was not this a peculiar and hard requirement? Is it made, at the present day, of any one? If it were nowadays made would any of our Christian men comply with it and be saved? To these questions we reply:

1. There was something hard to nature in this answer, yet nothing peculiar. For God requires of every rich or poor man to surrender all he has to God, and to hold nothing but as God's steward. The Gospel does not indeed require of owners of property a general resignation, so as to unsettle the foundations of the social system. But it does require such a consecration of all to God, that when the duty is made known to give some, or much, or all to God, the offering can be made. Hence there was nothing required, so far as the condition of the heart was concerned, which is not required of every man.

2. This young man, in professing to have kept the commandments, professed

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

23 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That [v]a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is [w]easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

v Chap. 13. 22; Mark 10. 24; 1 Cor. 1. 26; 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.—w Jer. 13. 23.

o prefer God and his commandments *o* everything else. He loved God with ll his heart, and above all things else. He had done this so abundantly that he was on the alert for some higher mode of righteousness. And yet, when put to the test, when taught that it was his duty and his chance to become an apostle, by giving up his fortune, he found that he loved mammon more than God.

3. This same young man would doubtless have preferred his money to his duty and his integrity in any case. To have preserved his fortune he would very likely have sacrificed any command in the table of the law. Hence he deceived himself in supposing that he had truly in heart kept the law. He had broken it from his youth up. The law condemned him. His heart was not right before it. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things. Now he had no way but to give up all and be saved by grace, and this he refused. *Treasure in heaven*—In place of thy *treasure* on earth.

22. *Sorrowful...great possessions*—Alas! what were these possessions worth that they should be put in competition with eternal life? And what had become of his proud readiness to do some good thing for so great a price? He fails sadly both in point of faith and works.

How much did he not lose even as regards this world! Almost anybody can be a rich man. There are millions of rich men meaner than the meanest poverty can make them. But how few have the offer of being an apostle! God does not require that all rich men should surrender their wealth and become poor for his sake. And as he restored to Abraham the son he was ready to offer at God's command, so to this young man he might have said after all: "*Keep thy wealth;* thou hast offered it to God and thou shalt have it back, given from God's free gift, with eternal life in addition. The apostleships are all filled; but thou mayest stay a rich man, and yet be an heir of eternal life." How soon did he lose his wealth, for which he lost eternal life!

§ 105.—Possibility of Rich Men's Salvation, 23–30.

23. *A rich man*—Mark says, "that trusteth in his riches." But this hardly alters it. How few rich that do not trust in riches! And how few poor who do not trust in riches they are not able to acquire!

24. *Camel...eye of a needle*—That is, it is absolutely a human impossibility. The emendation made by changing *camel* to *cable* is unauthorized. The phrase is a proverbial expression for an absolutely impracticable thing.

25. *Who then can be saved?*—All have the spirit of this rich man. And when we look around and survey the world, and count how many rich men in the Church are as covetous as they are rich, we seem to doubt the possibility of any man's salvation by the standard which our Lord here presents. Mr. Webb, the military preacher of the first John street Church, New York, well said: "I doubt the conversion of the man whose *purse* is not converted." The religion that costs the owner nothing is probably worth about its cost. The great mass of rich professors of religion, who live to make their children rich, are in immense danger of ruining their own souls, and destroying their own children

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but [x] with God all things are possible.

27 ¶ [y] Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, [z] we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the

x Genesis 18. 14; Job 42. 2; Jeremiah 32. 17; Zechariah 8. 6; Luke 1. 37; 18. 27.—y Mark 10. 28; Luke 18. 28.—z Deuteronomy 33. 9 chapter 4. 20; Luke 5. 11.

26. *With God all things are possible*—The salvation of a rich man is as miraculous as the putting a camel through a needle's eye. It is a *human* impossibility. But God can do it. But does not this reduce the rich man to just the same level as any other man, and so destroy all the force of our Lord's first reflections on the impossibility of bringing a rich man into the kingdom of heaven? We reply, that our Lord means to represent that the salvation of a rich man bears to the ordinary salvation of common men the same relation that a miracle does to an ordinary transaction. If the saving of an ordinary man be a miracle of grace, the saving of a rich man is a miracle upon a miracle. It is an event above the ordinary train of grace, just as a miracle is above the ordinary course of nature.

27. *We have forsaken all*—Peter's boast is not much better than the young man's profession. There is in both a large sensibility to what they have sacrificed, and a small sense of the impossibility of their highest services being worth anything to God, or being in any commensurate degree an equivalent for eternal life. God does not need us. We can do God no favour, nor make ourselves necessary to him. After all our best services, he might, without any injustice, drop us into nothingness. *What shall we have therefore?*—Something in the expression here seems to betray a spirit like that of the rich young man. Jesus had exposed this spirit in the young man, by requiring him to become his follower. Jesus, in the case of Peter, first shows him what, by grace, he will obtain, and then, in the following parable, warns him of the danger of the hireling spirit which seeks a reward of works and not of grace.

28. *Ye which have followed*—In the inauguration of the apostles, in chapter xvi, 19, the Lord appointed them rulers of the Church after his ascension, under the symbols of the *keys* and *binding* and *loosing*. Here he affirms the same appointment under the image of *thrones* and *judging*. The parallel passage in Luke xxii, 28–30, is explanatory of this, and should be diligently compared. *Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration* is explained by *Ye which have continued with me in my temptations*. *In my temptations* is antithetical with *in the regeneration*; the *temptations* denote the scenes of our Lord's earthly ministry; the *regeneration* the state of things after his ascension. *In the regeneration*—As this *regeneration* is a plain antithesis to the *temptations*, the latter term needs a brief analysis. These *temptations*, *first*, were primarily *our Lord's own trials in his humiliation state*. Their centre was his own person. But, *second*, they extended to those who *followed him*, namely, his disciples and believers. And, *third*, they characterized that period and state of things as a scene of humiliation and subjection. Antithetically to all this, the *regeneration* was at and after our Lord's resurrection. It was *primarily* centered in our Lord's own renovated person; for he then put off his servant form and put on his immortality. He ascended on high upon *his throne of glory*; yet to rule over his Church in heaven and earth. *Second*, that renovation overspread and included his followers, especially his twelve apostles. By the Pentecostal Spirit they were endowed with power from on high; they entered on the possession of the *kingdom appointed*, (Luke xxii, 29;) they received and exercised the power of the *keys* of

regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, [a] ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 [b] And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 [c] But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

a Chapter 20. 21; Luke 22. 28-30; 1 Corinthians 6. 2, 3; Revelation 2. 26.—*b* 2 Chronicles 25. 9; Mark 10. 29, 30; Luke 18. 29, 30.—*c* Chapter 20. 16; 21. 31, 32; Mark 10. 31; Luke 13. 30.

that kingdom; they ascended their twelve apostolic thrones as the viceroys of the Lord in his glorification. *Thirdly*, the Church was renewed and regenerated from the old to the new dispensation. The types and shadows had departed, the reign of the *kingdom of God with power* was begun. *Sit in the throne of his glory*—On the right hand of the Majesty on high. Heb. i, 3. In that same *throne of glory* he shall judge the world. Chap. xvi, 27; xxv, 31. *Sit upon twelve thrones*—We have already remarked (x, 1) that the number of the apostles was chosen in reference to the twelve tribes of Israel, as a symbolical intimation that Christ was king of Israel, and his apostles were his viceroys over the tribes. After the ascension the sacred number was still preserved, to indicate that the new kingdom was a virtual continuation as well as succession of the *twelve tribes*. *The Son of man* then sat upon his *throne of glory;* that is, his glorified throne; the apostles sat simply upon *thrones*. That these twelve *thrones* were their twelve apostolates in the Church on earth is confirmed by the next verse.

29. *Every one*—Of you apostles. *A hundredfold*—Not a hundredfold of the same article; for certainly no man would expect to receive a hundred fathers or mothers. It was a hundredfold better to have an apostolic throne like Peter, than to have a fortune like the rich young man, whose case prompted Peter's question. And all this, by the parallel passage in Mark x, 30, is to be *now in this time*. It is also to be *with persecution*, and in spite of persecution. That the apostles of Christ during their holy ministration in the Church were the happiest of men, over and above all the privations they suffered, was doubtless true to the letter. Thousands of mankind would indeed think and choose otherwise. But a rich part of the blessedness of the apostolate was to have a divine assurance within, by which it could know and realize its own exceeding great reward. *And shall inherit everlasting life*—In a world to come Up to this clause Jesus had confined his statement of the apostolic reward to this world; showing, contrary to the sorrow of the rich young man, that godliness is most profitable even for the life that now is. But to this earthly advantage *everlasting life* is to be superadded.

30. *But many*—This verse belongs properly to the next chapter. The maxim it contains introduces and closes the parable of the labourers, xx, 16. Our Lord has answered Peter's question. Verse 27. He now turns to warn Peter, in the parable of the next chapter, how the hireling spirit of that question is disapproved by God. It shows great want of a sense of the wickedness of our own heart, and the imperfectness of our own services, when a man expects his doings to entitle him to God's gratitude.

Bishop Butler, of England, lived unmarried, and spent his immense revenues in charity and alms. He wrote a great work, The Analogy, which has, perhaps, converted many an infidel. Yet in his latter days awful thoughts of his sinfulness overwhelmed his soul. He felt how little his charities weighed against the impurities of the heart. And though the glory of God had prompted his book, visions of his own fame therefrom had also entered his mind. He trembled before God. But that text, "Whosoever cometh unto me I will in

CHAPTER XX.

FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a [1]penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about th third hour, and saw others stand ing idle in the marketplace,

4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

1 Gr. *denarion.*

See chap. 18. 28.

no wise cast out," which many would suppose calculated only for viler sinners, was brought to his relief. He flung himself by faith upon it, and was richly consoled with the hope not of being saved by works of righteousness but by grace alone.

CHAPTER XX.

§ 105.—THE PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD, 1–16.

1. *For*—This word indicates that the parable is intended to illustrate the principles inculcated at the close of the preceding chapter, on which see our notes. The parable indeed enforces the same principles as were brought to view in the whole passage from xix, 16, namely, that we gain an inheritance in heaven not by payment for works done, but by the pure grace of God. No works of man can be an adequate equivalent for eternal glory. No works of man can confer a favour on God. Man cannot indeed be saved without *becoming right* and *keeping right*, by repentance of sin, and faith in Christ. But when he does by repentance and faith perform God's conditions, and become *right* for receiving God's favour and blessing, he has done God no favour, he has merited no eternal crown, he is an unprofitable servant, and he enters heaven by pure, abounding, forgiving, saving grace alone.

Kingdom of heaven—The divine administration. This parable is in close connection with the last four verses of chapter xix. The *householder* is God; the *vineyard* is the service of God on earth; the first *labourers* are servants of a hireling spirit; the second are unassuming sinners, who, upon being converted, serve at their master's will, leaving the reward to his decision. The former incur rebuke, the latter are justified. *Early in the morning*—As all thrifty householders should, and as is specially necessary in warm climates.

To hire—God seeks men, not they him first. He calls and they refuse or obey. *Labourers*—God gives men a chance to labour, not because he needs their work, but because they need his reward. Peter and the apostles were such labourers.

2. *Agreed with the labourers*—Christ called Peter and the apostles, and sent them as labourers in his vineyard, early in the morning of the Christian dispensation. *For a penny a day*—A very exact price precisely stated. For Peter had, in the arithmetical spirit, asked in the last chapter, *What shall we have therefore?* (verse 27,) and our Lord had informed him what his *penny* was. Verses 28, 29. A denarius or penny is about fourteen cents. It was a liberal day's wages.

3. *Third hour*—Nine in the morning. *Marketplace*—The *forum*, where marketings, lawsuits, public meetings, orations, and all general business were transacted. It was the place for idlers, newsmongers, and persons needing employment.

4. *Whatsoever is right*—You can trust my justice, perhaps my generosity, and serve from duty or from love. *Went their way*—To work without exacting a bargain.

5. *Sixth...hour*—Twelve o'clock.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, [a] Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and [b] whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the good man of the house,

12 Saying, These last [2] have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee

a Acts 17. 21; Hebrews 6. 12.
b Colossians 4. 1.

2 Or, *have continued one hour only.*
Psa. 146. 8; Isa. 29. 18; 61. 1, 2.

6. *Eleventh*—Leaving but one hour for the next hired to labour in. *All the day idle*—And, therefore, busy serving the devil, or in danger of being so.

7. *No man hath hired us*—As the question implies a *call*, so this answer implies an obedient response. These are men of a receptive faith, ready to comply with the offer of grace; saying, like Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" To such men the call will come, and the path of duty will be made plain. *Whatsoever is right...receive*—These humble servitors do not, like Peter, ask, What are we to have? They go upon bounty, not upon wages. They know that it is grace that engages them, grace that sets any value upon *gives* labours, and grace that at last their rather than *pays* the result.

11. *Murmured*—The arithmetical spirit of Peter is close akin to quarrelling with Christ, if he, an apostle forsooth, should not be paid with a richer heaven than some Samaritan or Gentile converts. Christians may indeed be rewarded according to their works; but the spirit that sets high value on its work, and claims high pay over others, may find its works very lowly prized with God. That very spirit may destroy the reward; for our final bliss may depend more upon what we are than upon what we do, although what we do will have much effect upon what we are. *Good man of the house*—The householder.

12. *Borne the burden*—The weight of the whole day's labour instead of a single hour. *Heat*—In the original, the καύσων or *scorcher;* which was the burning east wind coming at midday from the Arabian desert. They had toiled through this hot blast, while the others had laboured only in the one cool hour.

13. *Friend*—A term of cautious respect, with a reproving import. *Didst not thou agree*—The murmurer received all he had bargained for. Full justice was therefore done him. The lord had a right then to give his money where he pleased. We have no right to complain of bounties given to others, so long as justice is done to us.

It is not to be supposed, from this, that there will be murmurers among the finally saved. These murmurers are only supposed in the parable, in order to show their want of reason.

no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15 [c]Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? [d]Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

16 [e]So the last shall be first, and the first last: [f]for many be called, but few chosen.

17 ¶ [g]And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

18 [h]Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 [i]And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him*: and the third day he shall rise again.

c Romans 9. 21.——*d* Deuteronomy 15. 9; Proverbs 23. 6; chapter 6. 23.——*e* Chapter 19. 30. *f* Chapter 22. 14.——*g* Mark 10. 32; Luke 18. 31; John 12. 12.——*h* Chapter 16. 21.——*i* Chapter 27. 2; Mark 15. 1, 16, &c.; Luke 23. 1; John 18. 28, &c.; Acts 3. 13; 1 Corinthians 15. 3, 4.

14. *Go thy way*—To a low reward or to none at all, for thy mercenary, exacting, heartless, graceless service.

15. *Is thine eye evil*—Evil passions, especially envy, appear in the eye. *Good*—Bountiful, gracious.

16. *Last...first*—As he had warned Peter in the last verse of the last chapter. The arrogating spirit of the first may sink them to the last, and *vice versa*. *Called*—To labour for Christ. *Few chosen*—To the final reward; because few serve Christ in the right humble spirit.

§ 106.—His Sufferings again foretold, 17–19.

17. *Jesus going up to Jerusalem*—Our Lord has been for some months in Perea, the country beyond, that is, east of Jordan, teaching, and working miracles, and laying the foundations of the kingdom of God. The time is at hand in which, by the shedding of blood, there must be the remission of sins. Jerusalem is the place where for ages the typical sacrifices had predicted the real sacrifice which was now to be made once for all. He therefore crosses the Jordan, and begins to bend his way toward the memorable city. Here commences what we consider the Seventh Period of his ministry. See Hist. Synopsis. Imagining that he is on his way to erect his kingdom at Jerusalem, Salome prefers her ambitious request for her two sons. The two blind men at Jericho hail him Son of David, and are cured. Zaccheus entertains him, and Jesus pursues his way. See note on ver. 34. *Took the twelve disciples apart*—Mark tells us that as they went their way Jesus went before them, and that they were amazed at his course and afraid for his boldness. At his last visit, at the feast of dedication, he had enraged the Jews, and their temper had by no means become mollified by subsequent events. Our Saviour leads the way, but his disciples reluctantly follow. He now stops, takes them aside, and gives them this third warning, more distinctly than either before, that he does indeed go to meet death. He reveals new points, and unfolds new facts. He will be delivered to the Gentiles; so that in the great transaction in which Jews and Gentiles are interested, Jews and Gentiles shall be actors. Then should follow the *resurrection*; and that resurrection should be on the *third day*.

18. *Go up to Jerusalem*—The word *up* is naturally used of Jerusalem, as being situated, like many great ancient cities, upon high grounds. But the term was habitually used by the ancients of any capital or great central town, although, like Babylon, situated in a plain.

19. *The Gentiles*—The English word is from the Latin *gens*, a *race*. The Greek term ἔθνος, *ethnos*, is the word whence comes our *heathen*. The Jews

20 ¶ [j]Then came to him the mother of [k]Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons [l]may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and

[j] Mark 10. 35.—[k] Chap. 4. 21.

[l] Chapter 19. 28.

from their own standpoint called other peoples the Gentiles, that is, *the nations*. Here it specifically designates the Romans.

The parallel passage in Luke xviii, 33, 34, gives the fullest detail of our Lord's words. But Luke adds: "This saying was hid from them; neither knew they the things which were spoken." It was a striking instance of the influence of will over the understanding. They wished it otherwise, and would believe it otherwise than our Lord predicted. They saw, and heard, and imagined a great many things that seemed to contradict the natural import of the Lord's prophecies. They declined, therefore, to accept their literal interpretation.

§ 107.—Ambitious Request of Salome for her Sons, 20–28.

20. *Mother of Zebedee's children*—The mother of Zebedee's children was Salome; and the children were James and John, the beloved disciple. Their residence was at Bethsaida, on the shore of Lake Gennesaret. The father, though named, never appears in Gospel history after their discipleship; from which it is inferred that he was either dead or of an insignificant character. From the silent agreement of all the evangelists in thus leaving Zebedee in the background, Mr. Blunt, in his book on the Undesigned Coincidences of the Gospels, draws a very ingenious and forcible proof of the truth of Gospel history. The tacit consent that there was a Zebedee, who did indeed exist, but was of no sort of consequence to the history, except as the husband of Salome and the father of James and John, can be explained only on the ground of its actual truth.

However faulty the conduct of Salome appears on this occasion, she manifested a true, undying love for the Saviour in the most trying times of his subsequent sufferings. She was not solely attracted to him by the ties of self-interest or hopes of royal bounty. She was among those who stood by him to the last at the cross, and among the earliest to embalm him at the grave. She listened to the testimony of the angel that he had risen, and was one of the women that saw the risen Saviour by the way, and bore the message to the disciples.

Came with her sons—Both mother and sons were inspired with a common ambition. *Worshipping him*—Doing him reverence as already a divine King, the Messiah. Her reverence is none the less profound from the fact that she comes to desire a royal favour.

21. *My two sons*—James and John, with Peter, had been permitted to witness the transfiguration, and justly understood it to be an exhibition of Jesus in his royal glory as Messiah. They now perceive that he is going up to Jerusalem, and that the final crisis is approaching. They understand that somehow, through some terrible ordeal, he is to attain to the glorified kingdom which the transfiguration exhibited. Now, then, is the proper time to secure their elevated position in that new coming kingdom of glory. And who should more properly aspire to that position than those two disciples who had on so many occasions been distinguished by the Saviour's particular preferences? *Sit... right hand... left*—Just as in the Sanhedrim, on each side of the high priest there sat the next highest dignitaries. *In thy kingdom*—In that transfiguration kingdom which thou art now going up to Jerusalem to assume. One at least of these brethren saw the Lord on his cross—*on his right and left hand the crucified thieves.* Bitter indeed must

said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of [m] the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with [n] the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, [o] Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to [p] give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 [q] And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

m Chap. 26. 39, 42; Mark 14. 36; Luke 22. 42; John 18. 11.—*n* Luke 12. 50.—*o* Acts 12. 2; Rom. 8. 17; 2 Cor. 1. 7; Rev. 1. 9.—*p* Chap. 25. 34.—*q* Mark 10. 41; Luke 22. 24, 25.

the remembrance of this ambitious prayer have been at that moment!

22. *Ye know not what ye ask*—How often is it that our desires, and perhaps even our prayers, would ruin ourselves if granted. Hence Christians are generally, with much justice, careful how they specify before God in prayer the particular blessing they desire. They may in their ignorance ask things that God sees not best. So the prayer of Salome and her children was a prayer for unfitting objects lying in an imaginary future. *Are ye able to drink*—To attain an important place in my ascension glory would require an immediate suffering of my cross; are ye able to encounter it? The half unconscious yet presumptuous reply, "We are able," was no doubt uttered under the impression that the struggle was to take place at Jerusalem, in which, perhaps, they were to fight by his side, and they profess themselves willing for the trial. *Drink of the cup*—A common image in the Bible, especially for encountering any bitter trial or suffering. So our Lord himself prayed: "Let this cup pass from me." xxvi, 42. *Baptized with the baptism that I am*—It utterly mistakes the force of this expression to make it mean immersed with the immersion that I am immersed with. To be baptized by suffering is to be purified with suffering. It is more nearly cognate to the baptism by fire than by water. Suffering purified and consecrated the Saviour to his glorified royalty. So was Isaiah *baptized* with the touch of fire; that is, purified and consecrated to his prophetic office. And so the Saviour asked of these ambitious brothers whether they were able to undergo the same terrible purgation to be consecrated to the same glorification. *We are able*—Not ignobly did these two sons of Zebedee fulfil this daring profession. James early underwent the "baptism of blood" by martyrdom at the hand of Herod. Acts xii, 1. John indeed survived all the apostles; but all antiquity ascribes to him the glory of living in the spirit of heroic martyrdom. But this present expression, "We are able," was simply the language of human firmness apart from the divine aid, and therefore deeply defective, compared with the Christian heroism of these holy apostles after the pentecostal day.

23. *Ye shall*—Ye shall undergo sufferings patterned after mine. *Not mine to give*—As a matter of present favour, apart from the divine plan of human redemption. *To them*—The faithful believers. *For whom*—Upon condition of their faith, *it is prepared*, in the plan of salvation, *of my Father*. The kingdom of heaven is a reward, prepared by God for his faithful children. The assignment of its abodes is fixed by the laws of the kingdom itself. It was not, therefore, to be settled by Christ on mere human favour, as caprice or affection might dictate. So, though he loved the rich young ruler who asked the mode of earning eternal life, he could not therefore save him.

24. *The ten...with indignation*—The same emulation that prompted the two to ask prompted the ten to be angry. Our Lord soothed their jealousy by assuring them that in his kingdom there were no lordships.

25 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But [r]it shall not be so among you; but [s]whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 [t]And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 [u]Even as the [v]Son of man came not to be ministered unto, [x]but to minister, and [y]to give his life a ransom [z]for many.

29 [a]And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

r 1 Pet. 5. 3.—s Chap. 23. 11; Mark 9. 35; 10. 43; t Chap. 18. 4.—u John 13. 4.—v Phil. 2. 7. x Luke 22. 27; John 13. 14.—y Isa. 53. 10, 11; Dan. 9. 24, 26; John 11. 51, 52; 1 Tim. 2. 6; Titus 2. 14; 1 Pet. 1. 19.—z Chap. 26. 28; Rom. 5. 15, 19; Heb. 9. 28.—a Mark 10. 46; Luke 18. 35.

25. *Princes of the Gentiles*—Especially of the Romans. *Exercise dominion*—Authority for authority's sake. Obtain power to enjoy power. They exercise dominion to gratify their love of rule.

26. *Shall not be so among you*—Our Lord does not here mean that there shall be no orders in the Christian Church, or even in heaven. But these Church orders are founded on the principle of service rather than lordship. The officer of the Church is truly the servant of the Church; and if he exercise authority from any other motive he is guilty of worldly ambition. He is repeating the misdoing of James and John.

27. *Will be chief*—The only superiority here to be sought is superiority in labours and sufferings for the common good. If any would be great let him be the greatest servant.

28. *Give his life*—Even as the Son of man showed himself greatest of all by the greatest sufferings and sacrifices of all. *Give his life a ransom*—An atonement—an atonement by death, an atonement by substitution—is here briefly but powerfully expressed. The Saviour will give his life as a *ransom* for the souls of many. Now a ransom is always a substitute. The price paid is put in the place of the bondage of the ransomed person. If a sum be paid to ransom a slave, the money goes to the master, in the place of the slave's servitude. If the ransom goes to redeem a captive, the ransom is placed to the conqueror, in the room of the captive. If a Damon gives his life to ransom Pythias from the scaffold, Damon's death is the substitute for Pythias's death. And so if Christ's death be given to ransom sinners from death, his death must be a substitute for their death. He dies in their stead. His death is temporal, and theirs is eternal. So that if they by faith accept his death in place of their own, they may be saved from that impending doom.

§ 108.—The Healing of the Blind Men, 29–34.

29. *From Jericho*—He has left Perea, crossed the Jordan, and is again in Judea. See note on verse 17, and consult map. From the Jordan he goes up by a desert path until, in a green spot lying like an island in the surrounding waste, he finds the ancient town of Jericho, or "city of palm trees."

Jericho was a stronghold of the Canaanites, and was the first city subdued by Israel after the crossing of Jordan and entering the Holy Land. At the time of our Saviour it had been lately enlarged and beautified by Herod the Great, who often made it his residence. *Departed from Jericho*—Luke says, "He was come nigh unto Jericho." On this celebrated discrepancy of language between the two evangelists, a full discussion belongs to a comment on the passage in Luke. But we may here say, that there were more than one Jericho, namely, an *old* and a *new*. If our Saviour was really leaving one and approaching the other, both expressions would be literally true.

30 ¶ And behold, [b]two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

[b] Chap. 9. 27.

30. *Behold, two blind men*—Mark mentions but one, and tells us his name. He was Bartimeus; and the very fact that he so names him seems to indicate that he was a well-known person at the time. As his was *the* case of special interest, whose cure Mark wishes to narrate, so he omits to state that another man was healed at the same time. It is very possible that Mark was not informed of that fact. Inspiration does not imply omniscience. One inspired writer may be more fully informed than another. Both may be perfectly true, so far as they go. But the naturalness of the picture of the two blind men, sitting by the road side, leaves but little doubt that Matthew, who was a disciple, (as Mark was not,) wrote as an eye-witness of the miracle. *Heard*—Of course they could only learn the fact from *hearing* and not from *sight*. *That Jesus passed by*—The "prophet of Galilee," the raiser of Lazarus from the dead, the teacher and miracle worker of Perea, is not unknown by fame to these poor men. To the sufferers throughout the land that name would have a special interest. Its report would have a rapid circulation among the sons and daughters of affliction. They would somehow know more about him, and have more inclination for faith in him, than anybody else. *Son of David*—Modern commentators have much difficulty with the genealogy of our Saviour in the first chapter of Matthew, by which he is shown to be the son of David; but these two blind men have not. They confess his pedigree. They believe that the true descendant of the ancient king of Israel is now approaching, and that he is the promised one for whom Israel is looking.

31. *Multitude rebuked them*—At the time the multitude are respectful to Jesus. It is plain until after his triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, the Lord has the hearts of the people with him. *Because they should hold their peace*—That is, in the opinion of the multitude, not of the evangelist, they ought to keep silence. *But they cried the more*—With the blind men it is too serious a matter for nice decorums. The multitude can afford to stand upon etiquette, but with them it is a matter as important to them as their own *eyes*. Jesus the healer is now passing by, and now or never is their chance. So should the sinner improve the gracious hour of mercy and revival, when Jesus, in pardoning power, is revealed as near. *Son of David*—Again do they proclaim our Jesus as the son of the royal line of Israel kings. The same appellation was applied by other petitioners for relief; the blind in ix, 27, and the Syrophenician woman in xv, 22.

32. *Jesus stood still*—Above the respectful clamour of the multitude, the voice of earnest prayer reaches the ear of Jesus. *Called them*—That was a call they were ready to obey. Mark, who mentions but one, describes him as flinging off his loose outer garment, (see note on Matt. v, 40,) which might impede his running, to come up with the Lord before he should depart. *What will ye*—Before, they had uttered a more general cry for mercy. Now, they must frame their wants to a specific petition. Not that Jesus is ignorant of their real need; but that he will develop their want into special prayer, and thus make their faith and appeal for mercy all the more definite. So, although God may know our wants

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.
34 So Jesus had compassion *on* *them*, and [c] touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

[c] Chap. 9. 29; Mark 7. 33; Luke 22. 51; John 9. 6, 7.

yet for our own sakes, and that we may stand in proper relations of dependence and faith towards him, he requires us to shape our needs into verbal prayer.

33. *That our eyes may be opened*—Our eyes are thirsty for the light. Long years, perhaps, have passed, and the wonderful realities of creation that surround us have been to us a dark and dismal blank. Thine is the power that can again reveal them like a new creation to our view. How many are the confessions that the blind men make of Jesus as Lord, Son of David, the King that should come, author of mercy, possessor of power divine. So can sorrow make us humble and docile to the truth. Had Israel, her priesthood, her religionists, her rulers, but been blind, physically blind, needing the Saviour's restoring power, how quickly would they have yielded their faith to receive their sight. So truly is wicked unbelief the offspring of a proud and wicked will.

34. *Touched their eyes*—To show that the miracle was no coincidence or accident, but the immediate effect of divine power. His finger was the visible conductor of invisible omnipotence. Mark says that our Lord uttered the words "Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole." Some miracles early in his ministry, our Lord performed before their faith, in order to create faith; other miracles he performed subsequent to their faith, to reward and thus increase faith. *And they followed him*—He had bidden them "Go thy way;" but with an affectionate disobedience *they followed* their benefactor. Perhaps they concluded that their "way" was to follow his footsteps. Chap. xxi.

We may suppose, that as our Saviour crossed the Jordan, and came over the desert tract between the Jordan and Jericho, he walks at the head of his train of twelve disciples. As he departs from Jericho, his fame and the idea that he is on his way to Jerusalem attract the multitude to follow him. Chap. xx, 1. From Jericho he mounts the ascending hills of bleak limestone rocks, celebrated at that time as a route of danger from robber hordes, and characterized from that time to this as a scene of desert dreariness. It was the scene of the parable of the good Samaritan. By the same route that the men *went down* from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, did our Lord *go up* from Jericho to Jerusalem. Some miles he walks, when Bethany appears in a distant view, a little wide-spread village, perched upon a shelf of the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem. He arrived at Bethany, according to John xii, 1, six days before his last passover; the six days of what has been called in the Church, with true propriety, THE PASSION WEEK. Of the events of that week Matthew now proceeds to furnish a narration.

THE DAYS OF THE PASSION WEEK.

The events of the Passion Week are copiously detailed, and the successive days somewhat distinctly marked. Yet there is much difference of opinion among commentators in regard to the particular days of the part preceding the Lord's supper of Thursday evening. The main proof text is John xii, 1: *Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany.* And John xii, 12, shows that the day after was the triumphal entry. But it is utterly uncertain how John reckons his "*six days before* the passover." It may be exclusive or inclusive of the extremes; or it may include one and exclude the other. (See note on Matt. xvii, 1.) This being the case, I see no good ground for adopting any other than the scheme of the ancient Church,

MOUNT OF OLIVES. KEDRON. EASTERN MARGIN OF JERUSALEM, FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF THE MODERN WALL.

sanctioned by Olshausen, Tholuck and others. It supposes the triumphal entry to have been on Sunday, hence called Palm Sunday.

SCHEME OF DAYS.

SUNDAY, (*reckoned from Saturday sunset.*) Triumphal entry, xxi, 1–11. Clearing of temple, 12–16. Return to Bethany at night, 17.

MONDAY. The barren fig tree withered, 18, 19.

TUESDAY, (*from Monday sunset.*) Disciples marvel at the withered fig tree, 20–22. Replies of Jesus to the demand for his authority, 23–xxii, 14. Discussions and discourses in the temple, 15–xxiii, 39. Jesus prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem, and distinguishes it from the judgment day, chap. xxv. Assembling of conspirators, xxvi, 1–5.

TUESDAY NIGHT. Supper in Bethany, 6–13.

WEDNESDAY, (*from preceding sunset.*) Judas bargains with the Jews, 14–16.

THURSDAY, (*from preceding sunset.*) Preparation and supper, 17–35. Gethsemane, arrest, arraignment before Caiaphas, 36–68.

MIDNIGHT, (*between Thursday and Friday.*) Peter's denial, 69–75.

FRIDAY MORNING. Arraignment of Jesus before Pilate, and suicide of Judas, xxvii, 1–10. Barabbas released, and Jesus crucified by Pilate, 11–56. Entombment, 57–66.

SATURDAY. Repose in the tomb.

SUNDAY MORNING. Resurrection.

CHAPTER XXI.

§§ 111, 112.—TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM—THE BARREN FIG TREE—THE TEMPLE CLEANSED, 1–17.

Our Lord had now spent nearly three years in his holy ministry, furnishing to the people the proofs of his Messiahship; he now proceeds by a public demonstration to make proclamation of his claim to the title. He makes entrance into David's royal city as the Prince of peace, David's son, and heir to all the fulfilments of prophecy in regard to the Messiah.

Even at the present day there are some who, like Strauss and Hennell, maintain that our Lord really designed to head a military movement, and, by delivering the Jews from the Roman sway, become a temporal monarch. This triumphal entrance into Jerusalem is a main fact upon which they rely in supporting this absurd theory. But all the circumstances go to show that the whole performance was, on the contrary, a purposed demonstration of his character, as being, in contrast with worldly heroes, a prince of peace, a founder of a religious kingdom, and a conqueror with the weapons of truth.

1. He had previously announced his own approaching death. He had come to Jerusalem to lay down his life. Matthew xx, 17–19; Mark x, 32–34; Luke xviii, 31–34; John xi, 7–16.

2. His followers are wholly unarmed, and without military plan or equipments. They have not spears, but palm branches; they have not trumpets but simply the voice of psalms. Their leader is not mounted upon the proud horse, (an animal forbidden to Israel on account of its warlike character,) but upon the ass, a symbol of peace and humility.

3. The Roman government is not in the least disturbed. The jealous Pilate does not even hear of the joyous procession. When Jesus is subsequently brought before him they are utter strangers. It was the time of the passover; great multitudes were crowding the city, and the tumult of the Saviour's entrance would not be distinguished by the Romans from many other festal excitements.

4. Our Saviour, after the next symbolic act, the cleansing of the temple, proceeds into the sacred places, and commences teaching the people. But as, on the one hand, his enemies dare not touch him before their time, so, on the other, he avoids their treachery by spending his nights at Bethany among his friends. He keeps his foes at bay until he has had full time to make an impression that is never to be effaced upon the public mind, and has laid the indestructible foundations of his religious kingdom. He then, in due time

CHAPTER XXI.

AND [a]when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto [b]the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me.

3 And if any *man* say aught unto you, ye shall say, [c]The Lord hath need of them: and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

a Mark 11. 1; Luke 19. 29.——*b* Zech. 14. 4.

c Psalm 24. 1: chapter 29. 14, 16.

submits to the death he came to meet. He passes through scenes of suffering which are necessary to the fulfilment of prophecy, and in their very worst rage his enemies are but executing his own expectations.

Palm Sunday.

1. *And when they drew nigh*—This was as we suppose on Sunday, the first day of the PASSION WEEK. It was not the Jewish Sabbath, but the day after, like our Monday. The next Sunday, the day of the resurrection, was the first Sunday-sabbath.

Drew nigh unto Jerusalem—On his route from Jericho. *Come to Bethphage*—Mark and Luke say, "nigh to Bethphage and Bethany." This implies that the two places were very near each other; but there is much difference of opinion as to which was the nearest to Jerusalem. The order of the names would suggest that coming from Jericho Bethphage occurred first. But the evangelists may have used the order habitual with the inhabitants of Jerusalem. No reliable traces exist of Bethphage. *Bethany* (signifying the place of dates) was the residence of Lazarus and Mary. It stood near the foot of the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, and was a half hour's walk, or nearly two miles, from the limits of Jerusalem. *Bethphage* signifies the place of figs, and was so called because those fruits were either cultivated or sold at that place.

The mount of Olives—A mountainous ridge on the east of Jerusalem, separated from that city by the Valley of Jehoshaphat. It has three peaks or shoulders, the highest of which is 175 Paris feet above the summit of Mount Zion; so that the mountain commands a complete view of Jerusalem. It received its name from its abundance of olive trees.

2 *The village over against you*—The Greek preposition rendered *over against*, simply signifies *before* or *in front of* you. Our Lord had spent the previous night at Bethany. If Bethphage was the village before them, as their faces were towards Jerusalem, that village must have been west of Bethany. Such was probably the fact. Matthew mentions Bethphage only, and says they came to *it;* that is, *it* was now *before* them.

An ass tied, and a colt with her—The horse was an animal of pride and war; the ass, of humility and peace. Yet there was nothing mean in the humble state which our Lord now assumed. Even Solomon, the Jewish prince of peace, rode on a mule in state. 1 Kings i, 38.

3. *If any man say aught*—Whether owner or not. *The Lord*—This may imply that the owner was a follower of Jesus, and would recognize the fact that the taking of the ass was for *his* use. But the phrase *any man* seems to imply that such would be the power of that name, that the mind of *any* questioner would be supernaturally silenced by this answer.

4. *All this...might be fulfilled*—Our Saviour's purpose in this entire performance was, as above said, to identify himself before the world as the Messiah predicted by Zechariah as a meek king.

5 [d]Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

6 [e]And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and [f]put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon,

d Isaiah 62. 11; Zechariah 9. 9; John 12. 15.—*e* Mark 11. 4.—*f* 2 Kings 9. 13.

5. *Tell ye the daughter of Zion*—This is a memorable prophecy of the Messiah in his humble and peaceful character. It is thus translated from the Hebrew by Hengstenberg: "Rejoice greatly, thou daughter of Zion! shout for joy, thou daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king comes to thee; he is just and protected of God, afflicted and riding upon a foal the son of an ass." The prophecy of the entire preceding part of the ninth chapter of Zechariah, Hengstenberg holds to be a clear prediction of the conquests of Alexander the Great. But with these words at the ninth verse commences, in contrast, the descriptive picture of Jesus the Prince of peace. It was applied by the ancient Jews to the Messiah.

Daughter of Zion—The pious part of the Jewish people. *And a colt the foal of an ass*—Strauss and other objectors have maintained that this is simply a Hebrew parallelism, in which the last clause is but an echo of the former, both possessing the same meaning. Thereby the colt foal in the last clause would be the same as the ass in the first clause, both being terms for one and the same animal. But Hengstenberg justly denies that by the laws of Hebrew parallelism the two would necessarily mean the same individual animal. In the passage Genesis xlix, 11: "Binding his foal unto the vine, his ass's colt unto the choice vine," no one would claim that the foal and the colt were necessarily the same individual. In the present case it was our Lord's purpose to make his procession with both animals into Jerusalem a sort of visible embodiment of the prophet's words. Nor must this voluntary act upon the part of our Lord be looked upon as being a literal and final fulfilment of the prophecy. The prophet does not by these words intend to describe this or any particular scene. He only takes the riding upon the ass as the image to illustrate the meekness of the Messianic King. And our Lord, in thus *acting the image* of the prophet in visible form, does call the attention of the Jewish nation to his claim to be the King predicted by this prophetic image. This our Saviour performed at the passover, when the Jewish nation was, by representatives, present to behold; when perhaps millions of the nation were actually present to bear the news to all parts of the land.

7. *Put on them their clothes*—The clothes were put by the disciples on the beasts by way of a saddle. Both beasts were brought, not because our Lord was expected literally to ride both in the course of a journey of two miles' length, but to exhibit the appearance of a regal relay. *Set him thereon*—From which cavillers have objected that the language makes him seated on both animals at once. To obviate this, some have made the word *them* refer to the clothes. But this is an unnatural evasion of an imaginary difficulty. He was literally seated on one at a time, but virtually mounted upon both, as they were both his riding equipment. They were a common conveyance upon which he was borne.

Mark describes the colt as one *whereon never man sat.* This was not, we think, as Hengstenberg maintains, to indicate humility, but sacredness. So Luke xxiii, 53. Our Lord was "laid in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man was laid before." And so our Lord was born of a pure virgin. His birth, his triumph, his tomb, were thus alike. His appearance, his history, and his departure are thus indicated to be above the level of ordinary humanity.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; [g] others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

9 And the multitudes that

[g] See Lev. 23. 40; John 12. 13.

8. *A very great multitude*—No intimation is given that this scene was prepared. Everything seems supernaturally spontaneous; every man performs his part, and is in his place as exactly as the ass and colt. It seems like a drama managed by a sacred and divine power, in which everything moves of itself. *Spread their garments in the way*—These garments were the abba, or hyke, being the loose blanket or cloak worn over the tunic or shirt. See note on Matt. v. 40. To celebrate the arrival of some great hero by spreading carpets, or still more their garments, was a Greek and Roman custom, and is so natural as to be in use in modern times even in Christian countries. Garlands were strewed in Washington's path by his admiring countrymen. Robinson mentions a striking instance which took place in Bethlehem under his own eye, when the people threw their garments under the feet of the English consul, whose aid they were imploring. In 2 Kings ix, 13, it was used as a royal honour to a new-made sovereign. *Others cut down branches from the trees*—Stanley calls attention to the change of the tense in the verb rendered *cut*, by which it is to be rendered *were cutting*. That is, while one part were strewing their garments in token of humble affection, the others were cutting the branches of the palm, the emblem of victory, to strew his path. Others still, according to Mark xi, 8, cut and strewed mattings or twisted weavings of the palm twigs.

The palm is the most queenly of trees. The ancient coins which bore the inscription *Judea Capta*, represented Judea as a maiden sitting under a palm. See note on chap. ii, 18. Judea was anciently pre-eminently the land of palms. Jericho and Palmyra were both *cities of the palm*.

The palm rises with a tall, straight shaft, and spreads its leaves like rays from a centre; so that the tree itself has been held an emblem of life. The leaves of the mature tree are six or eight feet long, and when spread out are very broad. In Rev. vii, 9, palms of victory are borne in the hands of the saints.

The way—"Three pathways lead, and probably always led from Bethany to Jerusalem; one a steep footpath over the summit of Mount Olivet; another by a long circuit over its northern shoulder, down the valley which parts it from Scopus; the third the natural continuation of the road by which mountain travellers always approach the city of Jericho, over the southern shoulder, between the summit which contains the tombs of the prophets, and that called the 'Mount of Offence.' There can be no doubt that this last is the road of the entry of Christ, not only because, as just stated, it is and must always have been the usual approach for horsemen and for large caravans, such as then were concerned, but also because this is the only one of the three approaches which meets the requirements of the narrative which follows."—*Stanley*.

9. *Multitudes that went before, and that followed*—The procession formed in two separate parts. The foremost led the way as an advance guard; then Jesus, riding; and last, the rear band. Stanley assumes that the front band came from the city, and the rear from Bethany, and thus describes the scene:

"Two vast streams of people met that day. The one poured out from the city and as they came through the gardens, whose clusters of palms rose on the southeastern corner of Olivet, they cut down the long branches, as was their wont at the feast of tabernacles, and moved upward toward Bethany with loud shouts of welcome. From Bethany streamed forth the crowds who had assembled there on the previous night, and who came testifying to the great event at the sepulchre of Lazarus. The road soon loses sight of Bethany. It is now a rough, but still broad and well-defined mountain track, winding over

went before, and that followed, cried, saying, [h] Hosanna to the Son of David: [i] Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.

10 [j] And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city

[h] Psa. 118. 25.—[i] Psa. 118. 26; chap. 23. 39.

[j] Mark 11. 15; Luke 19. 45; John 2. 13, 15.

rock and loose stones; a steep declivity below on the left; the stooping shoulder of Olivet above it on the right; fig-trees, below and above, here and there growing out of the rocky soil.

"The two streams met midway. Half of the vast mass turning round preceded, the other half followed. Gradually the long procession swept up and over the ridge, where first begins 'the descent of the Mount of Olives' toward Jerusalem. At this point the first view is caught of the southeastern corner of the city. The temple and the more northern portions are hid by the slope of Olivet on the right; what is seen is only Mount Zion, then covered with houses to its base, surmounted by the castle of Herod, on the supposed site of the palace of David, from which that portion of Jerusalem, emphatically called the 'city of David,' derived its name. It was at this precise point, as He drew near at the descent of the Mount of Olives, (may it not have been from the sight thus opening upon them?) that the shout of triumph burst forth from the multitude: 'Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.'"—*Stanley.*

Hosanna—This is the Hebrew word for *save now*, being the original of the first two words of Psalm cxviii. 25. It was a supplicatory phrase for the person in respect to whom it was uttered, expressive of congratulation and triumphal acclamation. It was customarily used at the feast of tabernacles and other festivals, all of which were commemorative of the Messiah to come. Now they performed the celebration as for the Messiah, truly come. *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*—That is, as his ambassador. *In the highest*—In the highest degree, or the highest strains. Or, as most commentators think, in the highest heavens.

John informs us that it was the people that were with him when he raised Lazarus, whose testimony excited an enthusiasm in his favour. For this cause it was that the people *met him.* John xii, 17, 18. Luke adds that the Pharisees requested Jesus to rebuke the applause. When Jesus drew nigh to the city he wept over it. Luke xix, 41. Stanley thus traces the event:

"Again the procession advanced. The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the city is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments, and the path mounts again; it climbs a rugged ascent, it reaches a ridge of smooth rocks, and in an instant the whole city bursts into view. Then must have risen before the traveller the Temple tower; then must have spread the Temple courts, then the magnificent city, with its background—long since vanished away—of gardens and suburbs, on the western plateau behind. Immediately below is the Valley of the Kedron, here seen in its greatest depth, as it joins the Valley of Hinnom, and thus giving full effect to the great peculiarity of Jerusalem, seen only on its eastern side, its situation as of a city rising out of a deep abyss. It is hardly possible to doubt that this rise and turn of the road, this rocky ledge, was the exact point where the multitude paused again, and 'He, when he beheld the city, wept over it.'"

10. *All the city was moved*—The masses and the common people from Galilee, brought by the passover, who were upon his side, were *moved* with joy and gratulation. The Jewish rulers, especially of the party of the Pharisees, were moved with bitter opposition, but were held in check by the popular influences. John xii, 19. The Romans saw nothing sufficiently alarming in the excitement to give it their attention.

was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus [k]the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 ¶ [l]And Jesus went into

k Chapter 2. 23; Luke 7. 16; John 6. 14; 7. 40; 9. 17.—l Mark 11. 11; Luke 19. 45; John 2. 15.

Who is this?—This question was perhaps put by the home population of Jerusalem, and was answered by the new comers from Galilee and other places where our Lord had taught and wrought miracles.

11. *Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee*—They do not style him Messiah, or king, or conqueror. He is simply a *prophet.*

Our Lord's deeds of public authority are not terminated with his symbolical royal entry. He must perform a symbolical act of supreme priesthood. For he is both king and priest; Lord of the kingdom of God and the priest of the new ritual. And as in the former transaction he had fulfilled the memorable prophecy of Zechariah, so now he fulfils the promise in Malachi iii, 1-3. He should *come*, as Lord, *suddenly*, into his temple, and purify the sons of Levi. And the same remark may be made as in regard to the triumphal entry. Our Lord performed the act which is pictured in the image of the prophet.

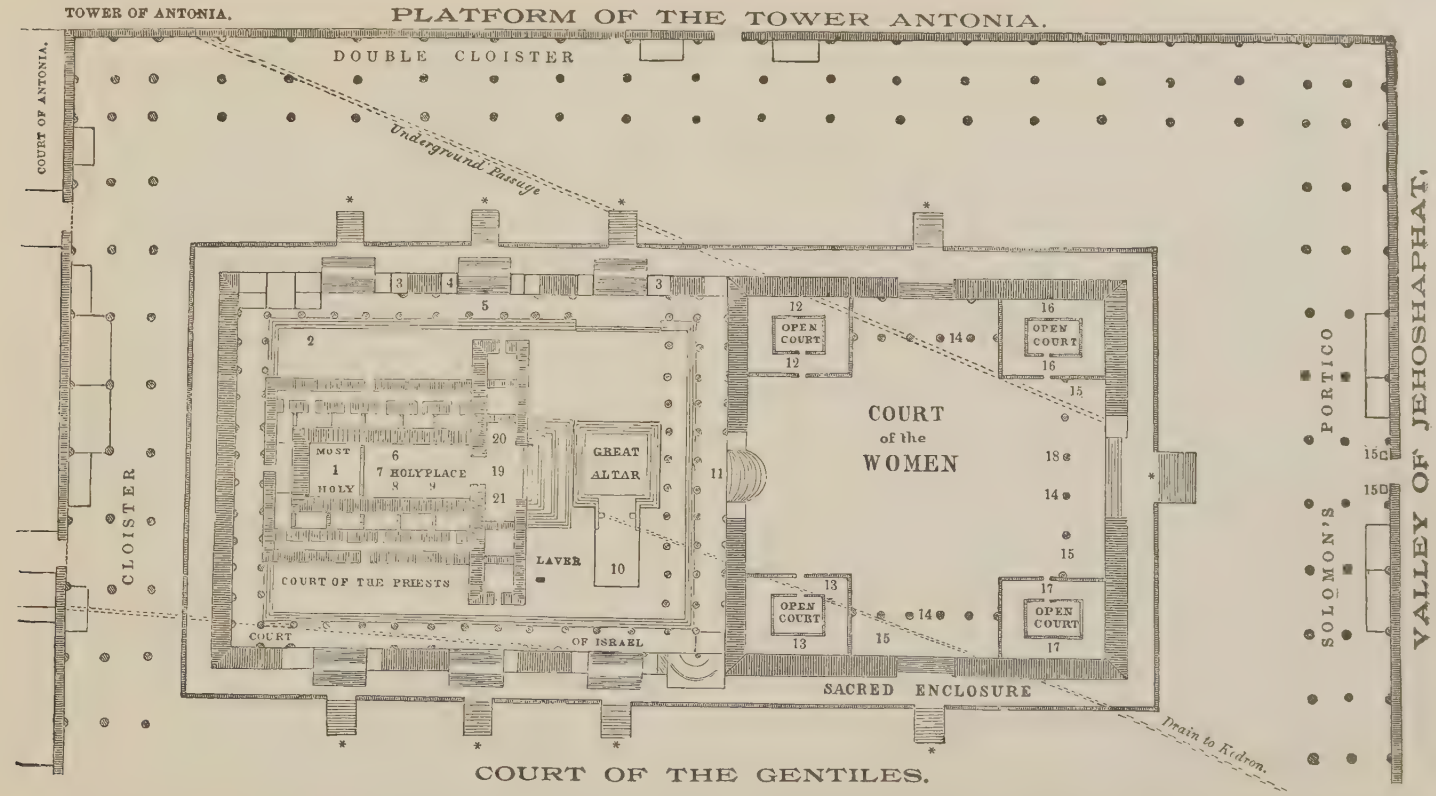
A somewhat similar cleansing was performed by our Lord at the opening of his ministry, as now at its close. John ii, 13-18. Doubtless Alford states the true reason why the first three Gospels omit any mention of that first cleansing, namely, that those three are nearly exclusively Galilean Gospels, until this entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem.

12. *Jesus went into the temple of God*—Historically, there was a FIRST TEMPLE and a SECOND.

The First, or Solomon's Temple, was the proper successor of the tabernacle built by Moses in the wilderness, (see note on xvii, 4,) being to it as a palace compared with a most humble cot, but upon the same model. It was indeed intended to be the house of God, the palace of Jehovah, God and King of the Jews. The temple or house proper was an oblong in form, and divided into two rooms; the interior one being the holy of holies, the exterior or front one the holy place. In the former was the ark containing the law, the lid of which was the mercy-seat, upon which rested the Shekinah, or cloud of the visible Divine Presence. Over this mercy-seat two cherubim bent face to face; whence God dwelt between the cherubim. As Jehovah here dwelt, so the forward room contained his furniture, namely, the golden candlestick, the table of presence-bread, (show-bread,) the altar of incense or perfumery. The priests and Levites were his royal servants. Before the door of the temple stood the great brazen altar, upon which were sacrificed (as the royal food) the offered beasts.

Around the temple building were the temple courts or enclosures. The first was the court of the priests, into which none but the priestly order might enter. Enclosing this was the court of Israel, into which all male Jews might enter; and fronting these the court of women Gentiles were admitted only to the outermost court, enclosing the whole. Each inner court rose, as in terraces, higher than the outer; so that the temple building mounted conspicuous above the whole.

The Second Temple, built upon the same site and model, after the captivity, and rebuilt by Herod the Great, was that in which our Saviour now entered. The entire temple area was a square, with an eighth of a mile to each side. It was entered by nine magnificent gates. The inside of the outermost wall was lined with covered promenades, called porches or porticoes, with cedar roofs, supported by marble columns and with floors of smooth sand variegated marble. These *porches* were thirty cubits wide, and the south-side one was thrice as wide. There was a synagogue room, in the south porch, which was the place where religious services were performed. In this synagogue it was that the doctors discoursed that Christ taught, and the disciples daily assembled with one accord. (Acts



1 Stone for censer. 2 Show-bread bakery. 3 Guard room. 4 Treasure room. 5 Single cloister. 6 Golden table. 7 Golden incense. 8 Golden candelabrum. 9 Stone steps. 10 Ascent to altar. 11 Gate of Nicanor. 12 Apartments for the deposit of sacrificial oil and wine. 13 Rooms for the ceremony of cleansing lepers. 14 Galleried cloister. 15 Treasure chests. 16 Rooms for the ceremony of release from a Nazarite vow. 17 Chambers for the deposit of wood. 18 Beautiful Gate. 19 Porch. 20 Marble table for fresh show-bread. 21 Golden table for stale show-bread. * Steps.

the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the [m] money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

13 And said unto them, It is written, [n] My house shall be called the house of prayer, [o] but ye have made it a den of thieves.

14 And [p] the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

m Deut. 14. 25.——*n* Isa. 56. 7.——*o* Jer. 7. 11; Mark 11. 17; Luke 19. 46.——*p* Isa. 35. 5; Acts 3. 1, 9.

ii, 6.) Hither resorted for recreation or converse Jew or Gentile. From the summit of the wall the perpendicular descent was unbroken to the bottom of the Kedron. At the southwest corner was the lofty pinnacle where the Saviour was tempted of Satan to leap into the awful chasm below.

Near the northern wall stood the Tower of ANTONIA, overtopping the temple, in which the Roman garrison was placed to maintain order. It was a square building, with a side of three hundred feet. A subterranean passage led from the tower to the court of the Gentiles, so that the Roman soldiery could enter at any time to suppress tumult. Besides this, the Jews had a small body of men, under a captain, to keep order about the temple grounds.

The walls of the temple were built of hard white stone, of stupendous size. From Mount Olivet the spectacle was truly magnificent. But the Jews held that these five ancient endowments were wanting to the second temple, namely, the *Ark*, the *Urim and Thummim*, the *Fire from Heaven*, the *Shekinah*, and the spirit of *Prophecy*. Yet in glorious fulfilment of the prophecy of Haggai, (ii, 9,) by the presence of Jesus the glory of the latter house has surpassed all the endowments of the temple of Solomon.

Jesus entered the Court of the Gentiles, for there it was that these abuses existed. As if to show their contempt of the Gentiles, the Jews had allowed this part to be filled with all the tumult of traffic. This was in direct contradiction to the prophecy quoted by our Lord, that God's house should be "a house of prayer for all people." Isaiah lvi, 7. Our Lord hereby indicates that under his dispensation the privileges of the Gentiles would be amply maintained.

Sold...bought—Animals for temple sacrifice and other commodities. *Money changers*—The Jewish money being alone accepted for the sacred treasure, brokers were always at hand to furnish it in exchange for the foreign coin. *Doves*—Used in sacrifice by the poor.

13. *Den of thieves*—Jer. vii, 11: "Is this house which is called by my name become a den of robbers in thine eyes?" *Den of thieves* is a terrible antithesis to the *house of God*. The word *den* probably is an allusion to the caves and recesses of rocks in Judea in which robbers and bandits found shelter.

14. *Blind...came to him in the temple*—Neander thinks it so strange that miracles should take place at this moment, that he pronounces the verses unhistorical! Verily, our Lord did not think the temple of God too sacred a place for deeds of mercy, nor the moment too valuable to put forth his power for poor humanity.

15. *Children crying in the temple*—How fitting that childlike voices should shout the praises of Him who allowed not children to be forbidden to come to him! Children in the temple above will forever chant his praises; nor can there be a doubt that these children were moved by a divine impulse to utter these praises, which were so truly emblematic of the place of the child in the merciful dispensation of Christianity

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, [q] Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

17 ¶ And he left them, and went out of the city into [r] Bethany; and he lodged there.

18 [s] Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19 [t] And when he saw [1] a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away!

q Psa. 8. 2.—r Mark 11. 11; John 11. 18.—s Mark 11. 12.—t Mark 11. 13.—1 Gr. *one fig tree.*

16. *Hearest thou*—Dost thou hear how they call thee Son of David—the king by descent—the Messiah by title? Dost thou note that they are mere *children* that do this? Jesus shows them that even of old, the praises of children were the subject of his own father David's psalms, and so no fit subject for present contempt and prohibition. Psalm viii, 2.

17. *Out of the city into Bethany*—The labors of this Sunday (the first day of the Passion Week) were now closed, and Jesus (as we are also told in Mark xi, 11) left the city of his treacherous enemies for the night, and lodged with his friends at Bethany. Thus did Jesus, by boldly defying the rulers, under popular favour, by day, and retreating from their jurisdiction by night, evade their machinations, and perform his ministry until his hour had come. On the morrow he returned to Jerusalem; and on the way the transaction of the following paragraph took place.

Monday of Passion Week.

§§ 112, 113.—THE FIG TREE WITHERED, AND ITS LESSON OF FAITH, 18–22.

The triumphal entry, the cleansing of the temple, and the withering of the fig tree, are a series of miracles in the order of climax. But it is a climax of judgment. The first indicated a Messiah of peace to the Gentiles; the second a terrible reformation in God's Church; and the third, the entire blasting of the Jewish pride and power. If the fig tree with its fair promise of leaves and its barrenness of fruit was the Jewish nation, its withering under his malediction was the perdition of the Jewish state and system.

18. *In the morning*—Of Monday the second day of the Passion Week. *He hungered*—He probably left Bethany before his breakfast, that he might attend the morning service at the temple.

19. *Leaves only*—Like a hypocrite with a fair show of profession. No fruit. Mark says that "it was not yet the time of figs." But the fig tree usually puts forth *fruit* before its leaves, and if this tree was able to put forth leaves, what defence had it for being fruitless? Or what business had it to be putting forth leaves, and so pretending fruit, if it were barren *just like the rest?* The Jewish nation had the leaves of a fair profession above all the nations; or, we may say, alone of the nations. But it was, like them, barren of fruit. *No fruit...hence forward*—He that is wilfully barren may find himself given over to impotence. And after that he shall, like the fig tree, wither away.

Some have cavilled at this act of our Lord as being destructive and malignant in its character. But it was one of a series of symbolical acts, from which no one suffered. The fig tree was by the road side; and so, probably, the property of no one but the Creator; and doubtless *He* consented to be at that much expense to supply material for the symbol. Matthew now omits all notice of the farther events of Monday, in order to pursue the sequel of the fig tree. Mark and Luke inform us that the Lord spent the day in quiet teaching in the temple, while the hierarchy were plotting to destroy him.

20 [u]And when the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, [v]If ye have faith, and [x]doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, [y]but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

22 And [z]all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

23 ¶ [a]And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and [b]said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, [c]I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will

u Mark 11. 20.——*v* Chap. 17. 20; Luke 17. 6. *x* James 1. 6.——*y* 1 Cor. 13. 2.——*z* Chap. 7. 7; Mark 11. 24; Luke 11. 9; James 5. 16; 1 John 3. 22; 5. 14.——*a* Mark 11. 27; Luke 20. 1. *b* Exod. 2. 14; Acts 4. 7; 7. 27.——*c* Prov. 26. 4, 5; Luke 6. 9.

Tuesday of Passion Week.

20. *And when*—On Tuesday, the next morning after the cursing of the fig tree. They spent the night at Bethany, and were on their return to the city. They are struck with the suddenness of the fig tree's withering, and Peter (Mark xi, 21) calls our Lord's attention to it.

21. *If ye have faith, and doubt not*—Jesus does not explain the symbolical import of either the triumphal entry, the cleansing of the temple, or the withering of the fig tree. Their symbolism appears from the intrinsic character of the transactions. This lesson of faith is here drawn from the miracle, because Jesus is soon to leave them to their own moral strength, amid the state of surrounding ruin prefigured by the withered tree. *This mountain*—Referring, perhaps, to Mount Olivet, over which they were passing.

22. *Believing*—With a faith that God inspires and you exercise. God will not give pure faith for a prayer or a work which he will not fulfil, nor yet will he promise the fulfilment, unless you exercise the faith he empowers. *Ye shall receive*—For God will not grant the power of faith for a gift he will not grant either in kind or in equivalent.

§ 114.—Jesus's Discourse with the Chief Priests in the Temple, 23–xxii, 1–14.

Christ's Answer to the Question of his Authority, 23–27.

23. *Into the temple*—Our Lord persists calmly in the work of teaching, while he knows that danger besets him, and that death is close at hand.

By what authority doest thou these things?—They ask this question, not because they do not know, but because they will not acknowledge. Jesus therefore proceeds to show them that they knew, and so compel them to the necessity of exposing their unwillingness to confess.

It was the province of the Sanhedrim to give authority to teachers in the temple, an authority which Jesus had never received.

25. *The baptism of John*—And of course John's mission. This mission and testimony they had once received. And having received it, they had acknowledged whence was the authority of Jesus for his miracles, his teachings and his claims to the Messiahship

say unto us, [d] Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; [e] for all hold John as a prophet.

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, [f] We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 ¶ But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, [g] I *go*, sir; and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, [h] Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the the kingdom of God before you.

d 1 John 3. 20.—*e* Chap. 14. 5; Mark 6. 20; Luke 20. 6.—*f* Isaiah 29. 10, 12; 56. 10, 11; Malachi 2. 7, 8.—*g* Ezekiel 33. 31; Titus 1. 16. *h* Luke 7. 29, 50.

Why did ye not then believe him?—Why did ye apostatize? and why do ye not even now receive the testimony of John, which explains the source of my authority, and answers your question?

26. *All hold John as a prophet*—Even Herod, who slew him, trembled at his name as of a holy and God-sent man. The rulers, from political motives, have deserted John; but with all the ranks of the common people, even to the publicans and harlots, there is a deep feeling that John was a messenger of God. These feared the people, as Herod did before them, and, as Luke (xx, 6) informs us, they also feared a shower of stones.

27. *We cannot tell*—That is, in the Greek, *We know not.* They would more truly have said, We know, but we do not like to confess. These teachers, who are the professed guides of the people, prepared to decide upon all questions, are now reduced to a "know not." *Neither tell I you*—If they had really not known, and had inquired in order to know, how readily would our Lord have answered them. But he now simply exposes their obstinacy to themselves and leaves them to reflect upon it. And to aid them in these reflections he gives them the following parable, which comes in close application.

§ 114.—Parable of Two Sons, 28–32.

It was by the conscience of the common people (who were so deeply by them despised as a mass of sinners) that the hierarchy were held in check; and our Lord now in this parable shows his questioners how much superior that unsophisticated common people is in comparison with themselves. The people, having no mock piety to sustain as a substitute for the true, are far more ready to feel their sins and repent than their leaders.

28. *What think ye?*—Inasmuch as ye cannot tell what ye think of my last question, what think ye of the following case? *Two sons*—The former representing *common people*, the latter representing the hierarchy.

29. *I will not*—He made no pretence of sanctity. He was a plain, defenceless sinner. *He repented, and went*—Having no false righteousness to trust in, when the time of visitation came, he felt his sins, and was ready to feel his guilt and repent.

30. *I go, sir*—He gives a polite answer with a *sir* to it. He professes obedience; but he substitutes the profession for the practice.

31. *Whether of them twain*—Which of the two. *The first*—The first did the will of his father, not in his first refusal, but in his subsequent repentance and obedience. *The publicans and the harlots*—No only the common people, but the worst of them. *Go into the kingdom of God before you*—They have no false piety to trust to. They have no false

32 For [i] John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; [j] but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 ¶ Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, [k] which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and [l] went into a far country:

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, [m] that

i Chapter 3. 1, &c.—*j* Luke 3. 12, 13.—*k* Psa. 80. 9; Sol. Song 8. 11; Isaiah 5. 1; Jeremiah 2. 21; Mark 12. 1; Luke 20. 9.—*l* Chapter 25. 14, 15—*m* Sol. Song 8. 11, 12.

conscience produced by a false system. They are open sinners, and feeling themselves such, they repent and believe.

32. *For*—He now proceeds to make a close and unflinching application.

§ 114.—Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, 33–46.

33. *Hear another parable*—You have felt the effect of one, now hear *another*. *Householder*—The head of a family. *A vineyard*—A symbol of the field of duty and service of God, customarily used in both the Old Testament and the New. See Deut. xxxii, 32, Isa. v, 1–7, and Matt. xx, 1. *Hedged it round about*—A hedge is a row of perfectly dense thorn bushes, (often in Judea the prickly pear,) planted around a field, to fence it in and exclude all

intruders. *A winepress*—Including the wine vat, which was a square or round vat or pit excavated in the earth, mortared and plastered so as to make it tight like a modern cistern. Over this vat was the *wine-press*, into which the grapes were heaped, and when the juice was trodden out it flowed into the vat.

Built a tower—A *tower* or observatory in the garden, having a view in all directions, in which a watchman is stationed to guard against robbers. The vineyard represents the Church or fold of God's service. This must be girt as with a *hedge;* it must have its ordinances for receiving the *flow* of the divine *nourishment;* it must have its *towers* and *watchmen* against the assaults of the profane or the incursions of hypocrites. *Let it out*—Leased or rented it, with rent to be paid from the produce. *Went into a far country*—God leaves men in their state of probation to work out their destiny.

34. *Time of the fruit drew near*—The harvest time. In the vineyard of our probation *all the time* of our responsible years is harvest time; in which we are expected to bring forth *fruit* to Him who hath *planted* and *let* to us the *vineyard*. But, as applied to Israel, it refers to the period of her history when, Canaan being fully possessed, God sent his prophets to remind his people of their duty. *Sent his servants*—His prophets, with all the means of warning and grace. The

they might receive the fruits of it.

35 [n]And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, [o]This is the heir; [p]come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 [q]And they caught him, and

n 2 Chron. 24. 21· 36. 16; Neh. 9. 26; chap. 5. 12; 23. 34, 37; Acts 7. 52; 1 Thess. 2. 15; Heb. 11. 36, 37.——*o* Psa. 2. 8; Heb. 1. 2.——*p* Psa. 2. 2; chap. 26. 3; 27. 1; John 11. 53; Acts 4. 27. *q* Chap. 26. 50, &c.; Mark 14. 46, &c.; Luke 22. 54. &c.: John 18. 12. &c.: Acts 2. 23.

servants were sent, as Mark expresses it, to receive *of the fruits of the vineyard.* Both according to Scripture and Jewish tradition, the prophets whom God sent were persecuted and martyred by ancient Israel. Jeremiah was stoned, and it is said Isaiah was sawn asunder. Heb. xi, 36.

In the present parable three sets of servants are said to be successively sent. In Mark and Luke *single* servants in succession are specified; but words are so used as to imply that other servants are with them. In the reports of our Lord's discourses given by the evangelists, the substance is given with more or less verbal sameness as inspiration suggested to the minds. Each is to be viewed as a substantial representation, divinely sanctioned, of our Lord's essential meaning.

35. *Beat...killed...stoned*—The word *beat* signifies literally, in the Greek, to flay or skin, which in this case is supposed to be done by beating. To *stone* signifies to stone to death, the Jewish mode of death for idolatry and blasphemy. Lev. xx, 2; xxiv, 16. We have then this climax: that the Jews abused, slew, and executed as enemies of God, the prophets whom God had sent.

37. *Last of all...his son*—Let it be remembered that this parable is uttered on occasion of their demanding by what authority he did these things, (verse 23.) Jesus first confounds them by asking a question they could not answer, (24–27.) He then propounds a parable, (28–32,) portraying their spirit in asking the question. In the present parable he is obliging them to perceive the answer he could give to their demand for his authority. The same authority that sent God's messengers of old to your fathers, has in these last days sent to you his Son. *They will reverence my son*—These words represent God's *rightful* expectation; that is, the expectation he has a right to have. If a human householder would have such an expectation, much more God has a reason and a right to expect reverence for his *Son.*

38. *This is the heir*— They confess his being *the heir, among themselves;* but they utter no such confession to him. Externally they hold him as an intruder, and treat him as a burglar and a robber. Thus with a masterly pencil does our Lord paint these rulers to themselves. In their own hearts they confess *this is the heir;* in their language and dealing with him they deny his *authority*, and crucify him as a blasphemer and traitor. By this we are not to understand that God does not foreknow the future wickedness of probationary men; but that he permits yet punishes their withholding what he has a right to expect. *Seize on his inheritance*—These rulers determined to retain the power over Israel. They rejected our Lord as a false claimant of authority, because he would remove the old dispensation and establish the kingdom of God. This would overthrow their own hierarchy. The words expressing the violence of the husbandmen are numerous and graphic: *kill, seize, caught, cast, slew.* They might nearly all occur in the narrative of Christ's own apprehension and crucifixion.

cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 [r]They say unto him, [s]He will miserably destroy those wicked men, [t]and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, [u]Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, [v]The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever [w]shall fall

r Luke 20. 16.—*s* Luke 21. 24; Heb. 2. 3. *t* Acts 13. 46; 15. 7; 18. 6; 28. 28; Rom. 9. & 10. & 11. *u* Psalm 118. 22; Isaiah 28. 16; Mark 12. 10; Luke 20. 17; Acts 4. 11; Eph. 2. 20; 1 Peter 2. 6, 7.—*v* Chap. 8. 12.—*w* Isaiah 8. 14, 15 Zech. 12. 3; Luke 20. 18; Rom. 9. 33; 1 Peter 2. 8.

40. *When the Lord...of the vineyard cometh*—Alford quotes this phrase as a decisive instance in which the destruction of Jerusalem is called the *coming of the Lord*. But we reply that *the Lord* who *comes* is not the *Son*, nor the *Son of man;* but God the Father Almighty. The *coming* is no way identical with the phrase by which Christ's *comings* are expressed; inasmuch as this *coming* is only a part of the parabolic action by which God's general providential visitation is typified.

41. *They say*—He compels them to utter their own condemnation. *He*—God. *Destroy those wicked men*—Destroy the Jewish state and nation. *His vineyard*—The Churchdom. *Other husbandmen*—The Gentile Church. According to Luke, the people who stood by when they heard this terrible result exclaimed, *God forbid!* The fact seems to be that the rulers made their terrible reply in order to seem not to see that the parable was a picture of their own character and destiny. But the people, by their sudden ejaculation, *God forbid!* showed that they fully understood its awful application. The rulers have now a thorough reply to their question: By what authority doest thou these things?

42. *Jesus saith unto them*—Our Lord now proceeds to hint to them that their first question, with which they opened this debate, was, as has just been said, completely answered. Still under a figure, that of a *stone rejected*, he indicates how he, though by them rejected, would ultimately prove to be Lord of all, whose judgment would *grind them to powder*. *The stone which the builders rejected*—Psalm cxviii, 22. Note the rapid yet harmonious changes of our Lord's illustration of the *stone*. The same *stone* is first a *rejected stone;* then, second, a *head corner-stone;* then, third, a *stumbling-stone;* and lastly, a *stone hurled from a balista*.

The stone which the builders reject is one which the architect or workman thinks too unshapely to be worked into the structure, and so casts it off; and this pictures Christ rejected by the Jewish rulers. *The head stone of the corner* is the large stone placed in the corner of a stone edifice, for the purpose of binding the two walls firmly together. And this describes Christ in his exaltation in the kingdom of God. Our Lord here interrupts the transition of the figure to declare, from Psalm cxviii, that this exaltation of himself *was from God*, and thus their question as to his authority is completely answered.

43. *From you*—And by this emphatic *you* he directly implies that *they* are, in solemn verity, the condemned husbandmen of the parable, and will be subjected to the terrible sentence they have themselves pronounced. *Given to a nation*—A race of people. Our Lord here predicts again the rejection of the Jews and the call of the Gentiles.

44. *Fall on this stone*—He is now a

on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, [x]it will grind him to powder.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because [y]they took him for a prophet.

CHAPTER XXII.

AND Jesus answered [a]and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

x Isa. 60. 12; Dan. 2. 44.—y Verse 11; Luke 7. 16; John 7. 40.—a Luke 14. 16; Rev. 19. 7, 9.

stumbling-stone; such stones as are found abundantly in the stony region around Jerusalem. A man falls over such a stone and gets bruised, or has a limb *broken*, perhaps; but he may recover himself, and place himself upon *the corner-stone*. *It shall fall*—In the siege of Jerusalem the stones hurled from the military engines, falling upon the Jews, did terrible execution. Mr. Milman says that the Roman army "threw stones, the weight of a talent, a distance of two furlongs upon the walls. The Jews set men to watch the huge rocks which came thundering down upon their heads. They were easily visible from their extreme whiteness, (this it seems must have been by night;) the watchmen shouted aloud in their native tongue, "The bolt is coming!" on which they all bowed their heads and avoided the blow. The Romans found out this, and blackened the stones, which now taking them unawares, struck down and crushed not merely single men, but whole ranks."

If our Lord's words are not sufficiently precise to limit the allusion to the balista, still they receive a forcible illustration from the engine.

Grind him to powder—A very unsuitable translation, as there is nothing in the original Greek that signifies either *grind* or *powder*. The precise phrase is, *shall winnow him*. That is, shall scatter him as a winnowing fan scatters the chaff. There is probably an allusion to Daniel ii, 34, 35, where the great *stone* scatters the other kingdoms "like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor."

Thus has our Lord answered the demands of these men for his authority. He is God's *Son* who has *come* for the fruits of the kingdom. If they reject him, they will yet find that he is Lord of all.

46. *They feared the multitude*—During all his quiet teachings in the temple during the Passion Week, and under his most terrible rebukes, they are, as it were, spell-bound, and unable to lift a hand against him until his work is done. *They took him for a prophet*—As the conscience of the common people was in favour of John the Baptist, so now was it so far on the side of Christ as to receive him, not indeed as the *Son*, but as a *messenger* to the vineyard.

CHAPTER XXII.

Tuesday of Passion Week.

§ 114.—Parable of the Wedding of the King's Son, 1–14.

At the close of the last chapter there seems to have been a suspension of the discourse of the Lord to the Pharisees, which he uttered in reply to their demand for his authority for his doings. They seem to have consulted as to the expediency of laying hands upon him. They conclude that this is not safe and our Lord takes the occasion still farther to prosecute his answer to their question, or rather his discourse in consequence of that question.

In this parable our Lord illustrates the dealings of God with the Jews from the commencement to the time of the destruction of the Jewish state and church, 2–7; then he traces the vocation of the Gentiles until the judgment day, 8–10; and finally the condemnation in judgment of those who are clad, (like the Pharisees he disputes with,) not in the righteousness of Christ, but in their own, 11–14.

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: [b] my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But [c] they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he

b Proverbs 9. 2; John 6. 50, 58.

c Gen. 25. 34; Rom. 2. 4; Heb. 2. 3.

2. *Like unto a certain king*—This parable is an expansion of the one in Luke xiv, 16. This is delivered later in our Lord's history, after the guilt of his enemies had become more glaring, and their punishment more sure. Our Lord therefore changes the rich man to a king; paints the guilt of the rejecters in more aggravated colours; assigns them a more terrible destruction, prosecutes the history of their being supplanted by the Gentiles; and traces it even until their condemnation at the judgment day. The *king* is God the Father Almighty; the *Son*, our Lord Jesus Christ; the *marriage* is his espousing the Church on earth; the *marriage supper* is the participation of the Gospel by men.

3. *Sent forth his servants*—This verse describes the preaching of the Gospel before the death of Christ, namely, by the apostles and seventy. *Call them that were bidden*—In Eastern countries a double call is given to guests at an entertainment: the first to allow them chance to prepare, and the second to inform them that the time has arrived, and all is ready. So these guests now to be *called* had all been *bidden*. The very plan of the Gospel bids every man to come; and then the ministry go forth to *call* those whom the Gospel has *bidden*.

4. *Sent forth other servants*—After the great sacrifice of the Lamb of God had made all things ready, *other servants* went forth. We have therefore in verses 4–7 the Gospel history to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. It is true that many of the servants sent forth after the crucifixion were the same persons as went forth before the crucifixion. But they were *other* in their commission, and were accompanied by *other* ministers of the word. *All things are ready*—The great entertainment has been made, the table of salvation has been spread, and all things are ready for acceptance. *Fatlings*—This word includes all animals that are fattened for food.

5. *Made light of it*—We have in these two verses two classes of rejecters of the Gospel described; namely, those who slight its offers, and they who persecute its offerers. Of the former we have in this verse described also two classes, namely, those who go to enjoy the estate they have, and those who go to get gain they have not by traffic.

6. *Remnant*—The persecutors are the comparative few and more violent. Strauss objects that it is unnatural to represent men as murdering those who merely come to invite them to a marriage. But he forgets that this is a king's invitation; and the persons are in a state of rebellious hostility to their sovereign, and simply avail themselves of this chance of showing their hostility to him. They are therefore guilty of treason. Similar was the offence of Vashti in refusing to obey the invitation of the king. Esther i, 12. And this is a significant picture of the madness of man's rebellion against the mercy of God.

7. *Wroth*—Wrathful. After the preachers of the Gospel had proclaimed

sent forth [d] his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not [e] worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and [f] gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 ¶ And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man [g] which had not on a wedding garment:

d Dan. 9. 26; Luke 19. 27.—*e* Chap. 10. 11, 13; Acts 13. 46; Rev. 3. 4.—*f* Chap. 13. 38, 47.

g 2 Corinthians 5. 3; Ephesians 4. 24; Colossians 3. 10, 12; Revelation 3. 4; 16. 15; 19. 8.

the doctrines of their risen Saviour, amid the bitterest contempt and persecution, for near forty years after his death, the iniquities of the Jews became full, God in his providence sent the Romans, who destroyed their city, removed the apparatus of their Church, and annihilated their state. Of this series of judgments we have here a brief but vivid picture, which is more fully, but scarce more clearly, filled out in chap. xxiv than it is here outlined. *Sent forth his armies*—Perhaps God sent out his angelic armies to accomplish the sentence of his justice upon the guilty city and race. (Rev. xix, 14.) But the armies of Vespasian and Titus, as being instruments of God's vengeance, may be called *his armies*. Of the movements of even wicked men, he may so avail himself as to accomplish his own righteous purposes without any merit on their part, or any approval or compulsion or inevitable causation or decree on his. So God says, Isaiah x, 5: "O Assyrian, rod of mine anger." Jer. xxv, 9: "Nebuchadnezzar my servant." *Their city*—It was once the king's city; it is now the city of the murderers, and the armies that destroyed it are reckoned as his.

8. *Then saith he*—As the Jews are now cast off, God will call the Gentiles to partake of his Gospel. *Not worthy*—They had rendered themselves unworthy of farther offers by their rejection of those they had received.

9. *Into the highways*—Not into the country, as some might think; for the whole transaction belongs to the city. The word *highways* seems to signify the intersection of the city streets; which were the natural places to find the largest number of men to invite. The king had at first invited the select classes; but they having refused to come, he now sends for the despised and poor.

10. *So these servants went out*—Unto the Gentile world, going, that is, "into all the world, to preach the Gospel to every creature." The minister is sent of God. The ministry is a divine institution, sanctioned by Christ, and will last to the judgment day. *Both bad and good*—That is, every sort of character, moral or vicious. Yet the *good* are not too good to need the Gospel, nor the *bad* so bad as to have no hope if they will accept it.

11. *When the king came in to see the guests*—The parabolic history overleaps vast spaces of time, and at one spring brings us to the judgment day. This is figured under the image of the king coming in to see the marriage guests. So this marriage lasts from the time of the coming of the Son of man to the time of his second appearing. Grandees who gave entertainments in ancient times, used to enter the dining hall after the guests were seated. Suetonius describes the Emperor Augustus as coming in while his guests were at table, and leaving before they had risen. *Had not on a wedding garment*—In the East much more regard is paid to the proprieties of costume for particular occasions than among us. To appear at court without a court dress is indeed,

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* [h] into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 [i] For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

[h] Chap. 8. 12.

[i] Chap. 20. 16.

in monarchical countries, viewed as an insult. But to appear at a royal marriage in one's ordinary dress could have nothing less in it than the most gross contempt.

12. *Friend*—There is here the politeness of solemn rebuke. *Speechless*—The spirit of brave contempt has deserted him at the trying time. Men, who are now loquacious and brave in sin and ungodly error, will be terribly dumb in the hour when conscious guilt *within* responds to the terrible voice of God's judgment *without*.

It is plainly presupposed that he was fully able to have been clothed with the proper garments. Poor though he was, it is not his *poverty* but his *neglect*, or his *contempt*, which has prevented his supplying himself with the proper garments. And this is illustrated by the fact that in Eastern countries, and in some degree among the Romans, the custom existed of supplying to the guests the proper vesture for the festal occasion. That this custom existed in ancient times is rendered probable by such passages as Gen. xli, 42; 2 Kings x, 22; Esther vi, 3; Revelation iii, 5. So Charden narrates that the vizier of a Persian Shah lost his life for not appearing before his sovereign in a gift robe.

It will then be noted this man represents the Pharisee who rejects the offered righteousness of Christ, and appears in judgment in his own righteousness. It is not the case of the thousands who pay no attention to the invitation of the feast, or those who persecute the inviters. It is one of those men good enough, in their own esteem, to come and stand the gaze of the host in their own natural character, slighting the robe of "the righteousness of God." What was this but the case of the very men with whom our Lord is now contending?

But why does our Lord suppose but one man of this character? Doubtless for two reasons. One is, that to suppose many would be to destroy the good order of the feast by supposing too great a breaking up. The second is, that any Pharisee in the company who might have conscience enough left, might feel it to be his own single case and tremble.

And he who reads, as well as those who heard, has abundant reason to be earnest lest this *one* be a true picture of his own case. Unless clothed in "the fine linen which is the righteousness of the saints," we shall be found guilty of a sad contempt when we appear before God, for which we shall be speechless when he puts the awful, *How?*

13. *Servants*—The officers. A different word and a different class of persons from the one who called to the wedding. *Bind him*—As lictors bind a criminal for his doom. *Outer darkness*—The *out-door* darkness. The guilty guest in the parable is thrown from the splendour of the banquet into the horrors of the midnight street. See note on chap. viii, 12.

14. *For many are called*—The high and the low, the good and the bad, were called to come to the marriage feast. *Few are chosen*—Or *elected*, as the word means. Myriads are not *chosen* because they do not come. And we know not how many who come fail of being chosen, because they have not accepted salvation by Christ. The dogma that they are not chosen because they are secretly predestinated by God's decree not to be chosen, affirms simply what is not said or implied. That dogma would lay the blame on God, and

15 ¶ [j]Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man:*

[j] Mark 12. 13; Luke 20. 20.

not upon those who are not chosen, and charge insincerity upon the *call.* It is to be noted that the *choosing* is after the *calling.*

§ 115.—Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees, and a Scribe question Jesus. Jesus questions the Pharisees, 15–46.

The Pharisees had now, in answer to their question as to his authority, (chap. xxi, 23,) listened to some three home-coming and searching parables. They now resort to allies for aid. First, they bring up the Herodians, who retire from the encounter silenced, 16–22. Then come up the Sadducees, who retire in similar defeat, 23–33. Then from a group of the Pharisees a lawyer tries him with a question, and is forced to acknowledge the wisdom of his answer; and finally the Lord, taking the aggressive with a query, completes their confusion and overthrow, 34–46. Jesus in the next chapter turns to the people and to his disciples.

15. *Entangle him in his talk*—Ensnare him, (a metaphor drawn from taking wild birds,) by involving him with the government; or by exposing his ignorance upon some point of law or religion.

16. *Herodians*—The Herodians were a political party rather than a religious sect. They were probably the partizan supporters of the Herod family, and so favourable to the Roman dominion. They were not therefore very strenuous for the peculiarities of the Jewish religion.

It was about one hundred and twenty years previous to this time that the Roman general Pompey, acting as arbiter between two rival claimants to the Jewish government, had subjugated Judea to the Roman sway. By Roman power the Herod family was sustained in authority over different provinces of Palestine. The pure Jews were grieved to see cruel and avaricious rulers appointed over their native land; theatres and Grecian gaities introduced contrary to Jewish manners; the Roman eagles displayed upon the military standards; the Tower of Antonia so refitted as to command the temple under Roman arms, and the high priests so often and capriciously removed by the Roman rulers as to make that ancient and sacred dignity almost an annual appointment.

This state of things was doubtless sustained by the Herodians. And yet Herod Antipas was at this time plotting to attain for his own royalty an independence of Roman power. He was secretly aiming to acquire the dominion, not only of Galilee but of Judea, which was his natural inheritance from his father Herod the Great. For this purpose he had formed a secret alliance with Artabanus, king of Parthia, and kept concealed military equipments for 70,000 men. The plot was revealed to the emperor by Agrippa, (see note on chap. xiv,) and Herod Antipas was banished to Gaul, where he died. The Herodians were, therefore, probably parties who at heart favoured the Herod family, as heads of an independent sovereignty.

Extremely opposed to this party of Herodians was the faction of Judas the Gaulonite, who held that it was rebellion against God to submit to the Romans or to pay to them tribute. These were fanatical Jews, going indeed beyond the law; for there is nothing in the Old Testament forbidding to submi when conquered by a foreign power. The whole nation so submitted when conquered and carried to Babylon *Master, we know*—They tell true, but with a most false intention. *Neither carest thou for any man*—Not even

for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites?

19 Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a [1]penny.

20 And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and [2]superscription?

21 They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, [k]Render therefore unto Cesar the

1 Gr. *denarion.* See chap. 18. 28.——2 Or, *inscription?*——*k* Chap. 17. 25; Rom. 13. 7.

Herod himself. They put on the air of expecting complete independence from him, under the hope that he will commit himself to some rebellious sentiment.

17. *Lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not*—If he say no, then he will incur the hostility of government. If yes, he loses the favour of the people, by which of late he had been so completely protected. The tribute was a poll-tax, or levy of a denarius upon every person, imposed by the Roman government ever since Judea became a province. *Cesar* was a name common to all the emperors, derived originally from Julius Cesar, the proper founder of Roman imperialism in the place of the old republic. The present emperor was Tiberius.

19. *Show me the tribute money*—The rule of dominion among the Jews themselves was, "He is sovereign who stamps the coin." By the very fact then that they had at hand as current coin the Roman penny, they acknowledged that the emperor was the established and settled governor of the country.

Brought unto him a penny—The Roman denarius was first coined B. C. 269,

four years after the close of the first Punic war. It became current coin in Judea after its subjection. It was the pay of a day's labour in Palestine; a soldier's pay was less. Like our word *dime*, it signifies *ten*, that is, ten ases, but it was nearer the value of our shilling, being about fifteen cents.

20. *Image and superscription*—The *image* was probably the likeness of the Roman emperor Tiberius Cesar. The *superscription* was the motto upon the coin, which declared his sovereignty. In earlier ages the coin bore the symbols of the republic.

21. *They say unto him, Cesar's*—And thus they acknowledge that Cesar's superiority is peacefully submitted to in the quiet of society and the commercial exchanges. *The things which are Cesar's*—If you consent to receive the gift of peace and order from Cesar, you must consent to render the payment of the expenses of his government.

In this reply our Lord evades the peculiarity of every party, yet sustains the truth in question. The Herodians cannot complain, for Cesar's government is not attacked. The Pharisees cannot complain, for his decision is but their own confession put in shape. The very Gaulonites cannot complain; for he does not decide that there are no just grounds for revolutionizing the government from the foundations, and asserting independence alike of Cesar's coin and Cesar's authority. All he decides is, that while Cesar's government is the acknowledged government, it must receive its dues. Our Lord refused to act as a political patriot or as a political arbiter. He simply decides as a religious teacher that government is right, and that an *acknowledged* government must receive the dues of a government

things which are Cesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22 When they heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

23 ¶ [l]The same day came to him the Sadducees, [m]which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24 Saying, Master, [n]Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the [3]seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, [o]not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they

l Mark 12. 18; Luke 20. 27.—*m* Acts 23. 8

n Deut. 25. 5.—3 Gr. *seven*—*o* John 20. 9.

Unto God the things that are God's—But Cesar has no right to infringe the rights of God. Human laws are limited by the divine law. The Christian must as far as possible comply with both. Where the human law conflicts with the divine, he must obey the latter and suffer the consequences.

22. *Marvelled*—The Herodians had doubtless been induced by the Pharisees to suspect that Christ was setting up a royalty in opposition to Cesar; but they find that he lays down maxims that not even a Roman would deny.

ENCOUNTER WITH THE SADDUCEES, 23–33. (See note preceding verse 14.)

23. *Say that there is no resurrection*—And their intention is to show from Moses, that the doctrine of the resurrection involves an inexplicable difficulty.

24. *Moses said, If a man die*—Deut. xxv, 5, 6. This law requiring a man to marry the widow of a deceased elder brother and raise up children as being his, was intended to prevent the loss of the memory of a son of Abraham. It was a part of the system by which the memory of the institutes of the old and true religion was to be preserved.

25. *Seven brethren*—The foundation of this imaginary case is in the apocryphal book of Tobit iii, 8. The Sadducees assume that the resurrection includes the revival of the relations existing in the present world. Consequently any second marriage produces this supposed contest in the world to come. How much more a sevenfold marriage. The Pharisees believed that the resurrection would take place at Messiah's coming, and a renovated realm should be established, in which the risen dead would engage in all the affairs of a new but sublunary life. Marriage, procreation, building, government would all continue. The difficulty stated by the Sadducees would, in that case, truly arise. Which of several risen husbands should have the risen wife? Which of a line of princes should be king?

29. *Ye do err*—To *err* means to *wander*. They do not merely make a mistake, but they wander in ignorance of the Scriptures. *Not knowing the Scriptures*—What they have to say, namely, with regard to man's relations in eternity. *Nor the power of God*—By which he is able to carry our resurrection through, despite all the difficulties raised by theology or science. Even at the present day the main objections against the resurrection are at issue with its possibility, through not knowing the Scriptures and *the power of God*.

30. *For*—He first corrects their first error, namely, regarding human relationships in a future world. *In the resurrection*—In the resurrection state

neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but [p] are as the angels of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32 [q] I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

[p] 1 John 3. 2.—[q] Exod. 3. 6. 16; Mark 12. 26; Luke 20. 37; Acts 7. 32; Heb. 11. 16.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, [r] they were astonished at his doctrine.

34 ¶ [s] But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then one of them, *which was* [t] a lawyer, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

[r] Chapter 7. 28.—[s] Mark 12. 28. [t] Luke 10. 25.

Neither marry—Spoken of males. *Given in marriage*—Spoken of females. Our sexual relations cease with the present state. *As the angels*—Not that they are angels; as some imagine that angels are truly glorified saints. But they are as free from corporeal propensities *as the angels*. Birth and death, food and digestion, planting and harvesting, belong not to that state.

32. *I am the God*—That is, the eternal God. Not a temporal nor a mortal God, but an eternal and an immortal. *Of Abraham*—An eternal God, standing in the relation of God to Abraham. And if Abraham's be an eternal God, Abraham must be henceforth eternal. For if one party to the relation be eternal, and the relation itself be eternal, the other party must be eternal

This meaning would naturally if not necessarily arise from the mere words; but it was surely the true meaning to the inspired mind of Moses, as it is the true meaning of God himself in speaking these words to Moses. Hence our Lord, with divine emphasis, raised, for a few moments, even the gross minds of these Sadducees to the elevated standpoint of Moses himself. For Moses did not conceive that God was the God of Abraham, as he might be the God of a perishing animal, or a bubble. The being who is elevated enough to have a true immortal God to be *his* God, must himself be neither the creature of time nor annihilation. *The God of the dead*—Of those *now dead*, or whoever will be *dead*. Our Lord here uses the word *dead* in the sense of these Sadducees with whom he is conversing, to signify *extinct*. God is not the God of the *extinct* or even of the *extinguishable* or transitory, *but of the living*. And Luke adds, "*For they all live unto him*:" they live by their relation to him who is their God.

33. *They were astonished at his doctrine*—Our Lord reanimated the dead-letter of the Old Testament in such a way as to astonish their minds and elevate their hearts. He poured the sense of immortality upon their spirit, from the pages that had by the lifeless teachings of their masters contained the sentence of death.

QUESTION WITH THE LAWYER, 34–40.

34. *Put the Sadducees to silence*—He had first silenced the Pharisees, then the Herodians, and last of all the Sadducees. See note preceding verse 15. A candid lawyer from their own company now ventures to question him, with the purpose, indeed, to *tempt*, that is, to *try* him, but also with the purpose of yielding, where truth required. *They were gathered together*—They collect into a consulting group.

35. *One of them*—Who seems to have been of their party, and knew too their plots and plans. He will *try* Jesus with a profound question, and fairly see what is his depth. *A lawyer*—One who was professedly well read in the law of Moses.

36. *Great commandment*—The Jew-

37 Jesus said unto him, [u]Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second *is* like unto it, [x]Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 [y]On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

41 ¶ [z]While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son* of David.

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u Deut. 6. 5; 10. 12; 30. 6; Luke 10. 27.——x Lev. 19. 18; chap. 19. 19; Mark 12. 31; Luke 10. 27; Rom. 13. 9; Gal. 5. 14; James 2. 8.——y Chap 7. 12; 1 Tim. 1. 5.——z Mark 12. 35; Luke 20. 41.

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ish Talmud reckons the positive laws of Moses at 248, and the negative at 365, the sum being 613. To keep so many laws, said the Jews, is an angel's work, and so they had much question which was *the great commandment*, so that they might keep *that* in lieu of keeping the *whole*.

37. *Jesus said*—Jesus gave him not only that which is *greatest*, but that which, if properly kept, will indeed keep the *whole*. *Heart...soul...mind*—All the affections and powers of the man.

39. *Second is like unto it*—Like in being founded in love; like in being in fact included in the first. For, if we love God completely, we shall perform all our duties to his creatures. *As thyself*—So that we *may love ourselves*. The Scriptures teach self-denial, but they do not teach self-annihilation. They forbid selfishness, but they do not forbid self-love. The love of our neighbor may not be of the same kind with the love of ourself. It may have more of a moral and less of an instinctive nature. Thus the love we have for our neighbour is different from the love we have for our nearest connections. The parental and conjugal relations require of us peculiar duties and peculiar feelings.

If I would love my neighbour as myself, I must not require him to do for me or my family the duties I do to myself or my family; since I do not desire to do such duties for him or his family. If I love my neighbour as myself, I shall be willing to do all my duties in my own proper place, and allow him to do the duties and reap the enjoyments of his proper place. This law is therefore the same as the golden rule, the former being stated as the law of the inner man, the latter his rule of external action.

The observance of this law would put an end to all injustice, violence, oppression, and war.

40. *On these two...hang*—They are the statement of that temper of heart from which we all acknowledge that the keeping of all the law and prophets would arise. *Law and the prophets*—The law given by God, with the prophets to enforce and predict the consequences of obedience or infringement.

THE LORD'S QUESTION TOUCHING THE CHRIST, 41–46.

41. *Jesus asked them*—The Lord has answered all their questions one by one as the opposers brought them forth. He will now turn the tables upon them to try them with a most deep and all-important question.

42. *What think ye of Christ?*—They have had plenty of law questions; they will now have a Gospel question. So wisely and so skillfully did he select this last question, as at once to point their minds to the great source of salvation, and yet leave them in defeat and dismay, simply because they close their minds against the truth. *Christ*—As we have before said, (chapter i, 1,) Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew Messiah. The Lord therefore asks, What think ye of the Messiah as predicted in the Old Testament?

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,

44 [a]The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

46 [b]And no man was able to answer him a word, [c]neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.

[a] Psalm 110. 1; Acts 2. 34; 1 Corinthians 15. 5; Hebrews 1. 13; 10. 12, 13.—[b] Luke 14.26.

[c] Mark 12. 34; Luke X. 40.—[a] Nehemiah 8. 4, 8; Malachi 2. 7; Mark 12. 38; Luke 20. 45.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

2 Saying, [a]The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

43. *In spirit*—That this signifies under divine inspiration is clear from Mark, who expresses it, "For David himself by the Holy Ghost said." Our Lord decides that David was the author of the Psalm, and that he wrote under *divine inspiration.*

44. *The Lord said unto my Lord*—Our Lord quotes from Psalm cx. In this Psalm, (which has been applied by both the Jewish and Christian Church to the Messiah) David describes the Messiah as his own Lord sitting at the right hand of God, who subdues all his enemies beneath his feet *On my right hand*—The place of honour. The heir or highest dignitary customarily sat at the royal right hand nearest the king, the next in dignity on the king's left. *Till*—Sit until then; but the words do not imply that his royal state shall then cease. *Thy footstool*—An allusion to the mode of ancient conquerors, who put their foot upon the heads of subjugated foes in token of their own supremacy.

45. *If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?*—Here was a point for them to explain. Nor can they admit it without acknowledging that while he is human as descended from David, so he is divine as the right hand assessor of the Almighty. It shows that his royalty is not on earth but in heaven. He sits at the right hand of God as King, while his enemies on earth are being subdued before him. On the Jewish view, our Lord was to be a conquering descendant of David on the Jewish throne. The relation therefore between the lordship and sonship of Christ, they are unable to explain.

46. *Ask him any more questions*—This closes his debate with them, and closes all earthly debate with these his enemies forever. Next he is brought before their judgment seat; and last they are to be brought before his judgment bar. So men gainsay him here to meet their doom hereafter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Tuesday of Passion Week.

§ 116.—JESUS, IN HEARING OF HIS DISCIPLES AND THE MULTITUDE, REPROVES SCRIBES AND PHARISEES WITH A DIVINE ELOQUENCE, 1–39.

1. *To the multitude, and to his disciples*—His active enemies have each made their assault and departed. He now turns to his own disciples and the multitude, warns them of the wickedness and danger of these his enemies, (1–12,) pronounces the approaching woes of Jerusalem, (13–36,) and closes with a strain of melting tenderness over the guilty city, (37–39.)

2. *Sit in Moses' seat*—By being the transcribers, readers, and teachers of Moses' words. The *seat* or *cathedra* was also used by Grecian philosophers in lecturing, who were thence called *cathedrarii.* The synagogue expounders stood while reading the very words of the law, but sat while expounding it These scribes and Pharisees were in no way the successors of Moses by ordination or lineal descent. They had not, any more than the Sadducees or Hero-

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for [b] they say, and do not.

4 [c] For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.

5 But [d] all their works they do for to be seen of men: [e] they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

b Rom. 2. 19, &c.—*c* Luke 11. 46; Acts 15. 10; Gal. 6. 13.

d Chap. 6. 1, 2, 5, 16.—*e* Num. 15. 38; Deut. 6. 8; 22. 12; Prov. 3. 3.

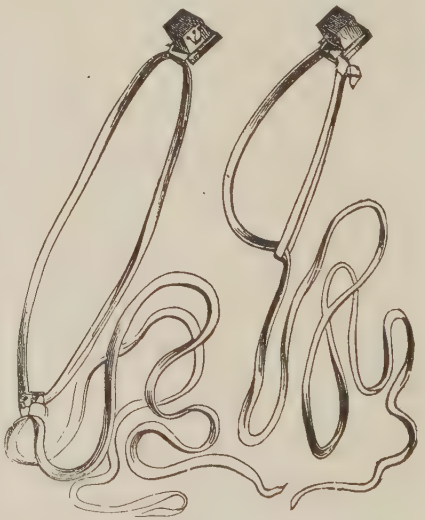
dians, a regular organic office. Their *seat* was not an apostolic throne, an episcopal see, or any successional position whatever. All they had was a reading desk and chair, from which, as from Moses himself, the words of Moses could come forth. The Greek word for *sit* signifies, *have seated themselves.*

3. *Bid you observe*—Not certainly the traditions of men; for those he has most unsparingly condemned. Chap. xv, 3. But whensoever truly *sitting in Moses' seat* and truly delivering, in their own or Moses' words, the law, that do. Meanwhile the copy of the law is ever in your reach, as your check upon them. Do not err by not knowing the Scriptures.

No argument can be drawn from this entire passage in favour of apostolic succession, of submission of the people to wicked pastors, or of the closing of the Bible to popular perusal.

4. *Heavy burdens and grievous to be borne*—Namely, the unauthorized traditional observances which they impose. These our Lord repudiates in pointed terms. In binding these burdens, the scribes do not *sit in Moses' seat.* They sit in *their own seat,* and deliver worthless and dead dogmas. *Move them with one of their fingers*—They are physicians who will not take their own medicines. Surely the most unscrupulous supporter of ecclesiastical succession will not claim that our Lord meant that such burdens should be carried by the backs of his own followers. On the contrary, he expressly taught his disciples to disregard the prescription of washing the hands, as a ritual observance, before they eat, although required by scribes who professedly sat in Moses' seat.

5. *Phylacteries*—The Greek word signifying *preservatives.* The phylactery



was a passage of Scripture, written on parchment, folded up, and tied on the forehead, so that it should be always in front of their eyes. This was a kind of mechanical observance of Deut. vi, 8, where Moses says of his laws: "Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes." The phylactery became in popular estimation, an amulet to repel demons, diseases, and other evils. *Enlarge the borders of their garments*—Moses had ordered the Israelites to distinguish themselves from the heathen

6 [f]And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 [g]But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even*

[f] Mark 12. 38, 39; Luke 11. 43; 20. 46; 3 John 9.

[g] James 3. 1. See 2 Cor. 1. 24; 1 Pet. 5. 3.

by fringes of blue, in the borders of their garments. So, as circumcision distinguished their bodies, these borders distinguished their dress. To mark their intense Judaism, these men affected a very broad border. A strong exhibition of national feeling in this way was intended to secure popularity. It was done in order to *be seen of men.*

6. *And love the uppermost*—Our Lord here explains the motive of all this display of external holiness and ultra Judaism. They desired to establish and enjoy the privileges of a religious caste or hierarchy. It was not the holiness of the people, or their salvation, or benefit they sought; but a self-exaltation into power. *Uppermost rooms at feasts*—It must never be forgotten that at their meals the ancients used not chairs, nor seats, but couches, and that they did not *sit* but *recline.* Three tables were so placed as to form the three sides of a square, with the fourth

open for entrance. Upon the side opposite the open entrance was the master's place; in the middle *room* of the couch occupied by himself, and the positions nearest him, were the places of honour. *The uppermost room* does not, therefore, signify a high room in the house, but the most noble reclining place, and this was the *uppermost room,* to which their ambition aspired.

Chief seats in the synagogues—Seats in the front of the congregation and facing it. See note on Matt. iv, 23. The passage might be more strictly rendered, they "love the uppermost *reclining-places* at feasts and the *foreseats* in the synagogues." The ancients *reclined* at feasts but *sat* in synagogues.

7. *Greetings in the market places*—Perversions of the ordinary tokens of social respect to the purpose of establishing an abject submission on the part of the people and a spirit of man-worship. Thereby the Rabbi attained an exaltation to the rank of a popular demigod, without any quality entitling him to veneration. *Rabbi*—This was the honorary title of the Jewish doctor. It had three degrees, of which the first was Rab, the great or master. The second was Rabbi, my master. The third was Rabboni, my great master. The results of all this systematic tiling were, 1. To place the Rabbi in a position of arbitrary authority, by which truth and falsehood were at his mercy. 2. To destroy all mental independence on the part of the people, which again reacted to produce a more despotic mastery in the hierarchy.

8. *Be not ye called Rabbi*—This does not forbid the ordinary diplomas of our

Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no *man* your father upon the earth: [h] for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

11 But [i] he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

12 [k] And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

13 ¶ But [l] woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

h Isaiah 63. 16; Mal. 1. 6; chap. 6. 9.—*i* Chap. 20. 26, 27; Mark 9. 35—*k* Job 22. 29; Proverbs 15. 33; 29. 23; Luke 14. 11; 18. 14; James 4. 6; 1 Peter 5. 5.—*l* Luke 11. 52.

literary institutions, any more than verse seven forbids the exchange of the ordinary civilities of life. Honour is due to learning; as wealth to industry, and authority to office. It is the *thing*, not the *word*, which our Lord here condemns under the word. *Master*—Our word mister is this same word master. If the title doctor is unscriptural, then the very word which we appropriate to the most ordinary man is equally so. We are thereby brought to a Quakerism. And Quakerism is, in another form, that same Phariseeism which is condemned in the fourth verse, which interpreted Deut. vi, 8, so as to require literal phylacteries.

9. *Call no man your father*—Here again we should obviously fall into absurdity by a bare verbal and literal mode of interpretation. Has not the child a right to call his own parent father? Our Lord does not condemn the greetings and appellations which express the cordial, affectionate, and respectful feelings of life. This is the reverse of the Gospel spirit. But under the symbol of the names *father*, *master*, and *rabbi*, he does forbid that submission to men which stands in the way of our submission to our father God, or master Christ, and our Rabbi, the Holy Spirit in his word and influences.

The word pope signifies father. If ever in the history of men the title *father* has been assumed in express transgression of Christ's command, it is in his case. Never has the title been used to cover a more despotic or illegitimate authority, or to produce a more abject surrender of body and soul into the hands of ravenous and remorseless men. Yet even in this case the guilt is not in the title but in the spiritual despotism the title expresses.

11. *Shall be your servant*—The pope indeed styles himself *servus servorum*, servant of servants. And if the name fulfilled the thing this would be enough.

12. *Whosoever shall exalt himself*—By these various modes of assumption *Shall be abased*—By the divine condemnation. *Exalted*—By the divine approbation, and the honour that cometh from God. This maxim Jesus is represented as repeating more times than any other.

EIGHT WOES UPON THE EXISTING POLITICO-RELIGIOUS DESPOTISM, 13–33.

13. *Woe*—This is a word of solemn denunciation of punishment. As here uttered, it implies that calamities of the most awful nature are impending over its guilty objects from the divine justice. It is the proclamation of a retributive destiny for years and ages of sin. Jesus apostrophises the scribes and Pharisees as if present.

Shut up the kingdom of heaven—They closed the doors of the Gospel by their false interpretations and by their wicked influence, and prevented the Jewish nation from receiving its Messiah. They will neither be saved themselves, nor allow others to be so. For this he pronounces the FIRST WOE.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [m]for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Woe unto you, [n]*ye* blind guides, which say, [o]Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

17 *Ye* fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, [p]or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is [1]guilty.

19 *Ye* fools and blind: for whether *is* greater, the gift, or [q]the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by [r]him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by [s]the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and

m Mark 12. 40; Luke 20. 47; 2 Tim. 3. 6; Titus 1. 11.—*n* Chapter 15. 14; verse 24.—*o* Chapter 5. 33, 34.—*p* Exod. 30. 29.

1 Or, *debtor*, or, *bound*.—*q* Exod. 29. 37. *r* 1 Kings 8. 13; 2 Chron. 6. 2; Psa. 26. 8; 132. 14. *s* Psa. 11. 4; chap. 5. 34; Acts 7. 49.

14. *Devour widows' houses*—This was done sometimes by plotting with the children to deprive their widowed mother of her estate, and sometimes by inducing the widow to give up her estate to themselves for superstitious purposes. For this he pronounces the SECOND WOE. *Long prayer*—It is not the *length* of the prayer which is their crime, but the fact that it is a mere *pretence*. It is used as a cloak to cover their rapacity. A very religious rabbi would pray nine hours a day. *Greater damnation*—The longer their prayers, the more their sin; for they were an appalling mockery of God.

15. *Proselyte*—The THIRD WOE is pronounced upon their efforts to extend their unhallowed dominion. The Jews were very zealous to make proselytes, and in our Saviour's day were not a little successful. *Twofold more the child of hell*—They did not sanctify the proselyte from his old heathen vices, and they imparted to him new Jewish wickedness

A proselyte was a convert from heathenism to Judaism. Proselytes have usually been divided into proselytes of righteousness, which included all who went so far as to worship the true God and observe the practice of primitive morality; and proselytes of the gate, including those who entered completely into Judaism by circumcision and the assuming the obligations of the whole Mosaic ritual. This is, however, comparatively a modern division.

16. *Blind guides, which say*—The next, or FOURTH WOE, is pronounced upon their false dogmas in regard to oaths. See on Matt. v, 34, 35. *Swear by the gold of the temple*—The gold here mentioned is not the gilding of the edifice, but the offerings of gold in its treasury.

17. *Temple that sanctifieth the gold*—That renders the gold deposit sacred.

23. *Woe*—"The four first woes are past," says Dr. Stier. "The four others follow in quick succession, ever heavier on the head, ever deeper into the heart."

Pharisees, hypocrites! [1]for ye pay tithe of mint and [2]anise and cummin, and [u]have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 *Ye* blind guides, which [3]strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [v]for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 *Thou* blind Pharisee, [x]cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [y]for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

t Luke 11. 42.—2 Gr. *anethon, dill.*—u 1 Sam. 15. 22; Hos. 6. 6; Mic. 6. 8; chap. 9. 13; 12. 7. 3 Or, *strain out.*—v Mark 7. 4; Luke 11. 39.

w Isaiah 55. 7; Jer. 4. 14; 13. 27; Ezek. 18. 31; Luke 6. 45; 2 Corinthians 7. 1; Hebrews 10. 22; James 4. 8.—y Luke 11. 44; Acts 23. 3.

The four following woes are pronounced upon different forms of hypocrisy. This FIFTH WOE is upon an extreme scrupulousness in regard to the slightest of ritual performances, with a slight remorse for the grossest immoralities. Our Lord does not condemn the strictness, but the laxity.

Pay tithe—The law of *tithes* is found in Leviticus xxvii, 31, upon which the following note by Prof. Bush gives a concise view: "The 'tithe' of a thing is its tenth part. Of the yearly products of the land of the Israelites the first fruits were deducted; out of the rest the tenth part was taken for the Levites. Num. xviii, 21." *Mint*—The herbs mentioned in this verse correspond mainly to those of the same name in Europe and America. They were abounding in Palestine and so of little value. *Anise*—The aromatic plant, by us called *dill*. *Cummin*—Corresponding to the caraway and used by the Orientals as a condiment?

24. *Strain at a gnat*—Rather *strain out* a gnat. Our Lord here uses a proverbial figure, by which a person in drinking is represented as filtrating a gnat from the liquid, while he will at another time swallow down a camel. It is a physical impossibility, indeed, but its meaning is none the less possible in matters of religion and morality.

Alford remarks: "*The straining of a gnat* is not a mere proverbial saying The Jews (as do now the Budhists in Ceylon and Hindostan) strained their wine, etc., carefully, that they might not violate Lev. xi, 20, 23, 41, 42, (and it might be added Lev. xvii, 10–14.) The camel is not only opposed as *of immense size*, but is also *unclean*." Indeed, in warm countries, where insect life is exceedingly exuberant, straining liquors for drinking is often necessary.

25. *Extortion and excess*—The SIXTH WOE is pronounced upon moral hypocrisy, in which men will show a fair exterior of conduct, while they are in secret practising the most abundant wickedness. The two forms of profligacy which our Lord selects are secret commercial dishonesty and secret licentiousness.

26. *Cup*—Or drinking vessel. *Platter*—Or dish for meats or sweetmeats. Our Lord compares these men to such utensils, which by a cleanly outside promised cleanly contents, while they contained filthy matter.

28. *Righteous unto men... full of hypocrisy and iniquity*—The SEVENTH WOE is pronounced upon pious hypocrisy, or

29 [z] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that [a] ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 [b] Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 *Ye* serpents, *ye* [c] generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 ¶ [d] Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and

z Luke 11. 47.—*a* 1 Kings 19. 10; Acts 7. 52; 1 Thess. 2. 15.—*b* Genesis 15. 16; Daniel 8. 23; 1 Thessalonians 2. 16.—*c* Chapter 3. 7; 12. 34. *d* Chapter 21. 34, 35; Luke 11. 49.

religious insincerity. Our Lord illustrates this by a most striking metaphor, taken from a class of objects very familiar around Jerusalem.

"There is one [custom] to which our Saviour alludes, that of whitewashing the sepulchres, which should not pass unnoticed. I have been in places where this is repeated very often. The graves are kept clean and white as snow, a very striking emblem of those painted hypocrites, the Pharisees, beautiful without, but full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness within."—*Dr. Thomson.*

29. *Build the tombs of the prophets*—The EIGHTH WOE is pronounced upon their ancestral hypocrisy. When the men looked into the history of Israel they took not the side of those who murdered the holy men of old, whose tombs are round Jerusalem. No, they were on the side of the prophets and martyrs. So they gave themselves much imaginary credit for being about as good as those holy martyrs.

30 *If we...in the days of our fathers*—They little realized how dark a picture history would draw of themselves.

32. *Fill...measure of your fathers*—Our Lord judicially gives them over, (just as Jehovah gives the devil over,) to do what he knows they *will* do. Gen. xv, 16.

The meaning of these two verses may thus be summed: Inasmuch as, even in the condemnation of your fathers, you confess yourselves their sons, there is no obstacle to your supplying all they lacked in wickedness.

33. *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers*—See our commentary on chap iii, 7. The severity of our Lord's language is a precedent for rebuke, but no precedent for such authority and power of rebuke. He had a divine attribute to see the character as it was, and a divine authority to pronounce its nature, and a right to inflict punishment which no mere mortal has.

How can ye escape the damnation of hell?—The question is sometimes the strongest mode of affirmation. Our Lord here means to assert that they cannot escape the damnation of hell. The word here used for hell is in the original Gehenna.

These EIGHT WOES are reduced by Dr. Stier to the sacred number seven, as he considers the last as a simple summation of the whole.

OUR LORD'S DENUNCIATION OF JUDGMENTS AND DEFINITE FAREWELL TO JERUSALEM, 34–39.

34. *Wherefore*—In consequence of all this wickedness. That is, inasmuch as you are thus reprobate, the following course of events will transpire: namely, messengers will be sent to you, but you will so treat them as to bring the full measure of wrath upon you. *Behold, I send*—Our Lord here assumes divine authority. It is he who sends the prophets, and wise men, and scribes of the New Testament. *Prophets*—Preachers, for as the word of God is a great prophecy of the world to come, so he who preaches it, truly prophesies. *Wise men*—Deep thinkers in divin-

[e]*some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and [f]*some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

35 [g]That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, [h]from the blood of righteous Abel unto [i]the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

e Acts 5. 40; 7. 58, 59; 22. 19.—*f* Chapter 10. 17; Mark 10. 39; Acts 5. 40; 2 Corinthians 11. 24, 25.

g Revelation 18. 24.—*h* Genesis 4. 8; Hebrews 11. 4; 1 John 3. 12.—*i* 2 Chronicles 24. 20, 21.

things, and true doctors in theology. For though the preacher stands first in the kingdom of God, yet the man who deeply studies and understands the things of God has his place, and is truly sent of Christ into his Church, whether ordained or not. *Scribes*—Who hold the pen of the ready writer. How measureless the amount of good the Christian *author* has done since our Lord spoke these words. First, the inspired writers of the New Testament; then come the early fathers of the church; and then the Christian historians, essayists, and poets. *Ye shall kill*—A large share of the first preachers, thinkers, and writers of the Church were martyrs.

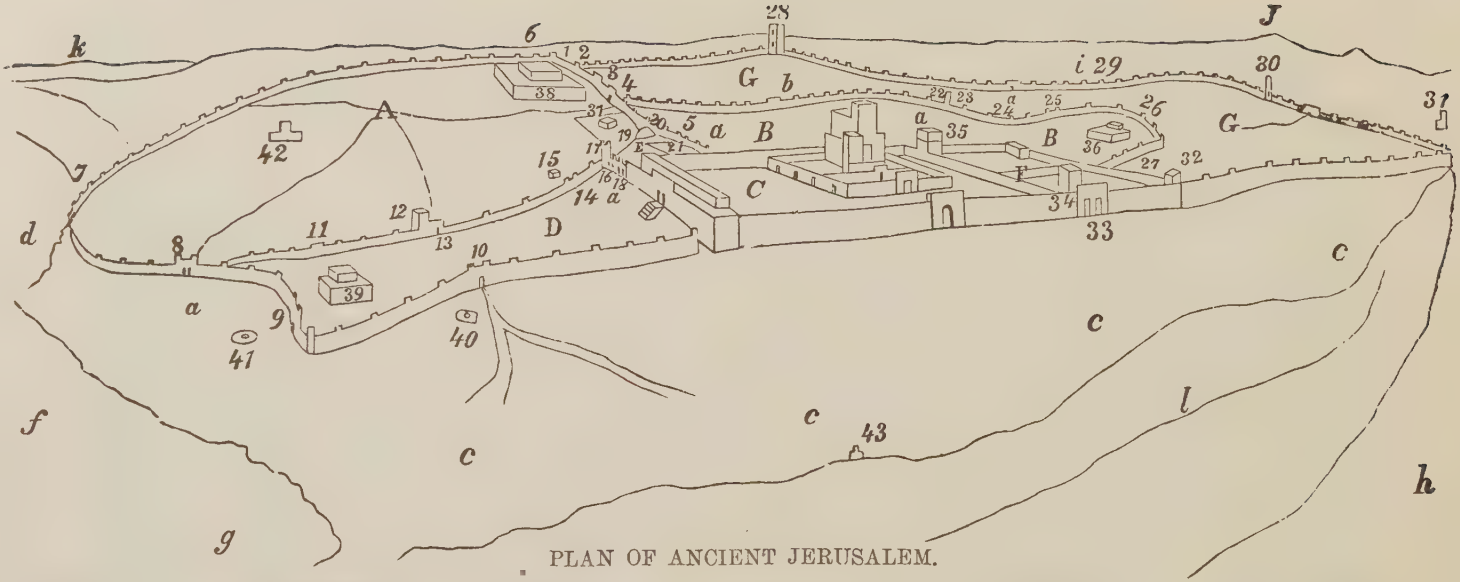
Crucify—There is no recorded instance of martyrdom by crucifixion, unless we include the cases of our Lord and Peter, who is said to have been crucified with his head downwards. But of the many violent deaths of our Lord's first followers, comparatively few are recorded.

35. *That*—In order that. This word depends upon the verbs kill, crucify, scourge, and persecute. Ye shall persecute them as if with the purpose that all this wrath may come upon you. This may be considered, however, a case where the *inevitable* effect is spoken of as the *intended* effect. *All the righteous blood shed upon the earth*—That is, righteous blood of the history and line of Israel. Our Lord is not speaking of righteous men, for instance, among pagan nations. This is shown by the fact that he speaks only of martyrs in the Old Testament pedigree, from Abel to Zacharias. *From the blood of righteous Abel*—Who was the first martyr. *Blood of Zacharias*—The last of the prophets whose martyrdom is, according to the arrangement of the Hebrew canon, recorded in the Old Testament.

There has been much discussion upon the true identity of this Zechariah, inasmuch as the martyr in 2 Chron xxiv, 21, was the son of Jehoiada. But Jehoiada and Barachia are words of the same meaning. This Zechariah was the subject of Jewish legends, and it is not improbable, though there is no proof, that in our Lord's day the one name was substituted for the other in ordinary discourse. The place where Zechariah the son of Jehoiada was slain accords with the words of Jesus; and his dying exclamation, "The Lord require it," accords with the thought our Lord here expresses very strikingly. Jesus here couples the first and last of Old Testament martyrs.

Ye slew—Our Lord here identifies them with the whole guilty line of the wicked party of Israel in all ages. A nation has its youth, its manhood, its age, its death. The vices and crimes of its earlier generations are often inherited by its later. Punishment is often delayed until the crimes of whole ages are temporarily expiated. And this is in no way unjust. Each man may repent, and be saved in the world to come. But the nation must be publicly made an example of divine justice upon national crimes, continued through a long series of years. And though the temporal punishment be commensurate with the guilt of their whole history, not a man really suffers more than his own sins deserve.

Between the temple and the altar—Referring to our ground plan of the temple, the reader can designate the sacred locality between the GREAT ALTAR of burnt offering and the HOLY PLACE.



PLAN OF ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

A—Upper City.
B—Lower City
C—Temple.
D—Ophel.
E—Millo.
F—Antonia, Court with Tower.
G—New City.
a—The Tyropœon.
b—Calvary.
c—Valley of the Kedron
d—Valley of Hinnom.
f—Mount of Offense.
g—Road to Jericho.
h—Mount of Olives.
i—Hill Scopus.
j—Mizpeh.
k—Plain along the Mediterranean.
l—Gethsemane.

Old Wall

1—Hippicus.
2—Phasaelus.
3—Mariamne.
4—Gate Gennath.
5—Water Gate.
6—Valley Gate.
7—Gate of the Essenes.
8—Pottery Gate.
9—Fountain Gate.
10—Sheep Gate.

Branch Wall

11—Stairs.
12—Giants' Tower
13—Gate.
14—Entrance.
15—Armory.
16—Bridge.
17—Horse Gate.
18—Prison Gate.
19—Out-lying Tower.
20—Prison.
21—Council-House.

Middle Wall.

22—Tower of the Furnace
23—Corner Gate.
24—Broad Wall.
25—Ephraim Gate.
26—Old Gate.
27—Fish Gate.

Outer Wall.

28—Tower of Psephinos.
29—Women's Tower.
30—Corner Tower.
31—Fuller's Monument.
32—Tower of Hananeel

General.

33—"Golden Gate."
34—Tower of Menh.
35—Tower Antonia.
36—Palace of Helena.
37—King's House.
38—Herod's Palace.
39—Palace of Monobazus
40—Pool of Bethesda.
41—Pool of Siloam.
42—Tomb of David.
43—Pillar of Absalom

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 [k]O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would [m]I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens [n]under *her* wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, [o]Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

k Luke 13. 34.—*l* 2 Chron. 24. 21.
m Deut. 32. 11, 12.

n Psa. 17. 8; 91. 4.—*o* Psa. 118. 26; chap. 21. 9.

36. *All...upon this generation*—And yet, had they repented, had this generation turned to him, their Saviour, they might every man have been redeemed, whether or not their nation could have been saved from its national ruin. This is shown in the pathetic declaration of the following verse.

37. *Thou that killest the prophets*—Identifying the Jerusalem of the then present day with the Jerusalem of past ages. *How often would I*—The beautiful tenderness of this verse shows that the warnings of the previous verses are the language, not of human anger, but of terrible divine justice. Love, deep love, may dwell in the breast of the judge who pronounces the sentence of death. *As a hen*—A simple and beautiful image of tender protection. His wing would have protected them when the storm hovered or the enemy approached.

38. *Your house is left...desolate*—Jerusalem is pictured as a person whose habitation has been completely desolated and abandoned to the pillager. The *house* may be an allusion to the temple, in which indeed Jesus uttered the words. It is now not God's house, but *your house.*

39. *Ye shall not see me*—In the word *ye* Jesus still considers Jerusalem as being the same historical and national person through all ages. *Till ye*—In your posterity in a future age. *Blessed is he*—The language by which the children in the temple recognized him as the Messiah. Psalm cxviii, 26. The meaning of the whole is, that the Jews shall be converted to Christ as a race, and doubtless Jerusalem as a city be restored, before the second coming of Christ.

Thus does this most terrible of all discourses first soften to the language of tender pity, and at last close with a valid promise. He could now bid Jerusalem farewell; to that generation a final farewell. Yet not final to Jerusalem, for she shall see his face again. But before that time one condition was foreseen as to be fulfilled. She should have acknowledged him as her true Messiah. How long the interval between that conversion and that advent, he does not say. In the prospective of the vast distance, the two events seem not now far apart. Yet long ages may intervene between the two. Jesus only declares that the latter shall not take place until after the former. See note on xxiv, 14.

Our Lord's public ministry has now closed. He departs from the temple, in whose court he had delivered this last discourse of terror and tenderness, Henceforth he retires to the bosom of his own disciples to prepare himself for the sacrifice.

There is a locality outside the wall which now encloses the grounds of the ancient temple, called, "The wailing place of the Jews." By paying for the privilege, the Jews of Jerusalem resort to this spot every Friday, and bewail the fall of their nation and temple. This scene of sorrow, mournfully illustrates how truly their house is left unto them desolate. Yet it suggests the hope that Israel is preserved for purposes yet unfulfilled.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AND [a]Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to show him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, [b]There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, [c]the dis-

a Mark 13. 1; Luke 21. 5.——*b* 1 Kin. 9. 7; Jer. 26. 18; Mic. 3. 12; Luke 19. 44.——*c* Mark 13. 3.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Tuesday of Passion Week.

§ 118.—JESUS FORETELLS THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, AND DISTINGUISHES IT FROM THE FINAL JUDGMENT, 1–51. XXV, 1–30.

1. *Jesus went out, and departed from the temple*—It was probably near the close of the day. From the temple, where he closed the pathetic prediction of the desolation of Jerusalem at the end of the last chapter, he doubtless bent his course toward Bethany, over the Mount of Olives. *And his disciples came to him*—As he made a pause in his departure, probably they brought up before him, to call his attention to the magnificence of the temple. "Master, see," was their animated language, according to Mark, "what manner of stones and what buildings are here." And Luke notes how it was "adorned w.th goodly stones and gifts." The stones of many ancient structures are called Cyclopean, from their stupendous size; and it is a matter of wonder and conjecture by what mechanism they were conveyed to the place they occupy. Robinson measured stones in the ruins of Baalbec, Syria, one sixty-four feet and another sixty three feet eight inches in length. And the *gifts* in the sacred depository were, many of them, offerings of kings. Must then so noble a pile be destroyed? If compassion could have saved it, doubtless it would have been saved. But even divine tenderness cannot save the incorrigibly impenitent.

2. *See ye not all these things?*—Our Lord echoes back their own question still more emphatically. Not merely its stones and gifts, but see its absolute whole. *Shall not be left here one stone upon another*—Every stone of *that* structure, built as the *second* temple, was completely thrown down. Titus at first tried to save it; but the decree of God was too strong for him. Later still Terentius Rufus ordered its site to be furrowed with the ploughshare. Our Lord's prediction was thus fulfilled to the letter. Yet, as if to show that there was still some mercy for Israel for the fathers' sake, there are still some of the deep substructions of Solomon's original temple which no ploughshare could reach, and which the malediction of our Lord passed untouched. *Thrown down*—Literally, separated from each other. Of the huge stones in the ruins of Baalbec Dr. Thomson says: "The corresponding surfaces of these enormous stones are squared so truly, and polished so smoothly, that the fit is most exact. I was at first entirely deceived, and measured two as one, making it more than a hundred and twenty feet long. The joint had to be searched for, and when found, I could not thrust the blade of my knife between the stones. What architect of our day could cut and bring together with greater success gigantic blocks of marble more than sixty feet long and twelve feet square."

3. *As he sat upon the mount of Olives*—We may suppose that toward the decline of Tuesday, of the Passion Week our Lord lingered upon the Mount of Olives, and his disciples, perhaps in respect for his evident depth of grief, held themselves at a distance from him. But as he arrives at the point where the prospect of the city and temple is most unsurpassably gorgeous he takes a lonely seat. *The disciples*—That is, his three special disciples, Peter, James, and John; and also Andrew, as we learn

ciples came unto him privately, saying, [d]Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

d 1 Thess. 5. 1, &c.

by Mark. *Came unto him privately*—That is, they dared to put the question to him apart from the rest. Yet we may well suppose that, before the discourse itself was commenced, all the disciples gathered to hear its important announcement. Of the three evangelists who narrate the discourse, Matthew alone, we think, was present; and his report of it is by far the most complete and verbally exact.

Tell us—In order to comprehend this much misunderstood discourse, we must first well understand the *question* which drew it forth. Matthew states it with most completeness. And as he puts it there are TWO *questions:* the first is a *simple*, and the second a *compound* one. The first is, *When shall* THESE THINGS *be?* The second asks, *What shall be the sign of the two events, (or one, as they may be,)* namely, THY COMING, *and the* END OF THE WORLD? Here then are three points of inquiry; namely, THESE THINGS, THY COMING, and the END of the world.

In order to a full understanding of this most illustrious of prophecies, we require three things:

First, That we may be allowed to supply from one evangelist the omissions by another of important passages, and allow the parts so supplied to modify the meaning of the context which they supplement. Second, We must dismiss all self contradictory double meaning in the words of our Lord. He spoke of momentous matters about which poetry deals; he described exciting events; but he spoke prose and no poetry. He delivered nought but literal descriptions. Third, We must make the meaning of the terms in the answer correspond with meaning of the terms in the question. The main terms or points of the questions, as we have already remarked, are three:

A. THESE THINGS. The disciples ask When shall *these things* be? By this phrase in the question, and therefore in the answer, is clearly meant the events of the destruction of Jerusalem, of which he had just spoken.

He had just told them that the temple shall be totally demolished, and of the events attendant upon that matter they ask, When shall *these things* be? So in the discourse uttered an hour or so ago, (xxiii, 36,) he had said of the selfsame events: "Verily I say unto you, all THESE THINGS shall come upon this generation." Just parallel to this is the celebrated verse 34 of this chapter: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all THESE THINGS be fulfilled." And so Luke xxi, 9: "For THESE THINGS must first come to pass, but the end is not by and by."

B. CHRIST'S COMING was the second point of inquiry. There can be no doubt what it means in the question; and, therefore, no doubt what it means in the answer. They meant to ask when would be his literal bodily *coming;* and if our Lord did not play with words, he also meant by these words in his answer his *second personal appearing*, and nothing else. And the word PAROUSIA, which the disciples used, never in the whole New Testament signifies anything else than a bodily presence. And the destruction of Jerusalem is never implied by that term. Nor is Christ ever represented as *coming* at the destruction of Jerusalem. In every instance, therefore, where the *coming* of our Lord is spoken of in this discourse, whether in the noun or verb form, common sense plainly dictates that the meaning should be the same, and the same as its meaning in the question, namely, *the personal coming of our Lord at his second advent.*

C. THE END. The disciples plainly ask about the END of the world. This our Lord plainly teaches will take place at his second advent, or PAROUSIA. So the disciples imply. The same common

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, [e]Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For [f]many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; [g]and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that

[e] Eph. 5. 6; Col. 2. 8, 18; 2 Thess. 2. 3; 1 John 4. 1.

[f] Jer. 14. 14; 23. 21, 25; ver. 24; John 5. 43.
[g] Verse 11.

sense suggests, that in each of the cases where the word occurs, it should mean the *end of the world at the judgment day*.

With these postulates, we hope to clear this discourse of all artificial obscurities.

4. *Jesus answered and said unto them* —The discourse consists of three parts. The *First* is a description of the THESE THINGS of their first question, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem; at the same time distinguishing that event from the second COMING of Christ, xxiv, 4–42.

Secondly, Parabolic illustrations of the second coming, xxiv, 43–xxv, 30.

Thirdly, A description of the judgment at the second coming, xxv, 31–46.

It is with the first of these three divisions that all the difficulty arises. I suppose this whole division to consist of five paragraphs, in which the downfall of the city and state are described, and distinguished from the second coming.

I. A caution not to confound the DESTRUCTION of the city with the END of the world, 4–6.

II. The commotions and PERSECUTIONS preceding the destruction of the city described, and then contrasted with the EVANGELIZATION of the world before the end, 7–14.

III. A description of the trials of the siege, closing with a contrast between the COMING of the FALSE Christs and the ADVENT of the TRUE Christ, 15–27.

IV. The PROLIXITY of the slaughter and captivity attendant upon, and through ages succeeding the destruction of the city, described and contrasted with the SUDDENNESS of the end, 28–31. Luke xxi, 24.

V. The easy CALCULABILITY of the approaching destruction of the city described, and then contrasted with the divine CONCEALMENT of the knowledge of the end, 32–41.

Each one of these paragraphs, it is seen, contains a description of the circumstances of the destruction of the city, etc., terminating with some point of *contrast* with the end.

It would greatly aid a proper understanding of the contrast drawn by our Lord, if the first part of the discourse were printed in five separate paragraphs. Of the five paragraphs, the proper subject is the downfall of Judaism; but each ends with a point of contrast with the *end*.

I. OUR LORD WARNS THEM NOT TO CONFOUND JERUSALEM'S DESTRUCTION WITH THE END OF THE WORLD, 4–6.

4. *Take heed that no man deceive you* —The disciples no doubt believed that the time when Jerusalem would be destroyed would be the end of the world. That they had some doubt of this, appears from the fact that they embraced the two events in two separate questions. Our Lord's first care was, to set them right, in this paragraph, upon that point. He therefore warns them, that no future false Christ should tempt them to believe that his second advent had arrived; and that no commotion should induce them to fear that the end of the world was nigh.

5. *Saying, I am Christ*—In regard to the historical fulfilments of the details, consult our comments on Mark But this caution clearly shows that it was of a literal coming which the discourse is to treat, and not a figurative.

The caution appears in more expanded form in the closing part of paragraph third, (verses 24–27,) and the same contrast is drawn. Surely no one can compare the two antitheses contained in verses 5 and 6 and in 24–27 without seeing that they contrast the same things, and that, therefore, the end in verse 6 is the *coming* of verse 27.

6. *Wars and rumours of wars*—Wars actually occurring, and wars rumoured

ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For [h] nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 [i] Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many [k] be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And [l] many false prophets shall rise, and [m] shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

h 2 Chron. 15. 6; Isa. 19. 2; Hag. 2. 22; Zech. 14. 13.——*i* Chap. 10. 17; Mark 13. 9; Luke 21. 12; John 15. 20; 16. 2; Acts 4. 2, 3; 7. 59; 12. 1, &c.; 1 Pet. 4. 16; Rev. 2. 10, 13.——*k* Chap. 11. 6; 13. 57; 2 Tim. 1. 15; 4. 10, 16.——*l* Chap. 7. 15; Acts 20. 29; 2 Pet. 2. 1.——*m* 1 Tim. 4. 1; verses 5, 24.

as likely to take place. *These things*—These words are in italics, being added by the translators from the parallel passage in Luke. The phrase *these things* stands here in precise contrast with the *end*. The most obvious principles of interpretation require, as before stated, that this *end* in the answer should be the same as *the end* in the question asked but a moment ago. The meaning, moreover, is not that these troubles are not themselves the end; but (what is important) that they are not the *tribulation* which portends or precedes the end of the world. Our Lord denies that these troubles will be followed by the end. It was indeed a doctrine of the Jews, as it is of Scripture, that a terrible *tribulation* will precede the coming of the Messiah. But our Lord forewarns them that these troubles, though they *must be*, as foreseen and predicted, yet they are not the true *tribulation* that precedes the second advent.

II. THE COMMOTIONS PRECEDING THE DESTRUCTION CONTRASTED WITH THE MILLENNIAL EVANGELIZATION PREVIOUS TO THE END, 7–14

Our Lord farther cautions the disciples that the ensuing troubles are not the tribulation preceding the end, from the fact that the Gospel must have a universal sway before the world ends. Christ has not come into the world for nothing. His Gospel, his doctrines, and his religion, as well as his atonement, are calculated for the world. And as the atonement is for all the race, so the preached Gospel is for all the world. Hence the disciples, in supposing that the end of the world was nigh at hand, and confounding the *tribulation* of Jerusalem with the tribulation that precedes the end of the world, were destroying the true length and breadth of the Christian dispensation.

7. *For*—Our Lord now proceeds to show what he means by saying that all *these things must* be. Commotions will spring up, both moral and physical.

8. *Beginning of sorrows*—Those more distant troubles and *tribulations*, while they have no connection with the END of the world, are but the omens of the nearer catastrophe to the state and temple about which you have inquired.

9. *Then shall they deliver you up*—Our Lord now proceeds to describe the persecutions which they should suffer in the propagation of the Gospel previous to the downfall of the Jewish power. *Hated of all nations*—Under the terrible slanders of their Jewish enemies, the early Christians were considered as atheists and devourers of children. Tacitus, the Roman historian, charges them with being enemies of the human race. *All nations*—All with whom you come into contact.

10. *Many*—Many professing Christians. There shall be apostacies and scandals in the Church.

13 [n]But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this [o]gospel of the kingdom [p]shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 [q]When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desola-

[n] Chap. 10. 22; Mark 13. 13; Heb. 3. 6, 14; Rev. 2. 10.—[o] Chap. 4. 23; 9. 35.

[p] Romans 10. 18; Colossians 1. 5, 23.
[q] Mark 13. 14; Luke 21. 20.

13. *Shall endure unto the end*—This is essentially the same end as is specified in the inquiry, namely, the *end of the world.* For he who endures through the day of his probation endures to the judgment day. *Shall be saved*—Not from the destruction of Jerusalem, but from the condemnation at the judgment. This is giving the words precisely the same meaning as in chap. x, 22, where see note. Luke here adds, in view of the persecutions described in this paragraph: "But there shall not a hair of your head perish." This cannot mean that none of them should be slain, for it is expressly said in verse 9, "They shall kill you." But the dying martyr, under the express guidance of God, and with the certainty that heaven sees it good, is not perishing. And the reason why the martyr does not perish, and why he may possess his soul in patience, even in the midst of martyrdom, is given in the following verse, namely, his death is the source of triumph to the cause for which he chooses to die.

14. *Gospel of the kingdom*—The doctrines of Messiah's universal kingdom. *Shall be preached in all the world*—In all nations, and thereby the Messiah's universal kingdom, become universally acknowledged. Mark says the Gospel must be published among all nations. It is certainly difficult to study these various phrases, *Gospel of the kingdom in all the world—unto all nations—among all nations*, without seeing the necessity of bringing them into association with those many texts which describe the conversion of the world to Christianity. Certainly the narratives of the travels of the apostles into distant countries, as late tradition has specified, are too scanty, if not too apocryphal, to be quoted as the fulfilment of this verse. *For a witness*—Witness that all men might believe. John i, 7. Our Lord does not here say, as some construe his words, that the Gospel shall be preached for a witness *against* all nations, but *to* all nations. Assuredly God does not send the Gospel to increase men's condemnation. This would make it intentionally the *poison* rather than the *bread* of life. *Then shall the end come*—What end? Unless our Lord answered very deceptively, he meant the end about which they inquired, namely, the end of the world. Nor is it of the slightest consequence to argue that our Lord here does not say that all the world will be converted, and that its conversion will last a long mundane period. To describe the millennium is not his purpose. He alludes to it, in order to show his disciples that the tribulation of the destruction of Jerusalem is not the tribulation of the judgment; for the predestined universal spread of the Gospel stands between them. The millennium first, and then the second advent.

We may also add that there is a sort of perspective in prophecy. The nearer event, as in a painting, is drawn full size, but the more distant dwindles to a point. See note on xxiii, 39.

On the whole, perhaps, all this paragraph is clear. Commotions and persecutions shall come, but these are not the tokens of the END. On the contrary, you shall be preserved from their power, that you may secure that universal Gospel diffusion for which the Church is founded and suffers, and which lies between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world.

III. A DESCRIPTION OF THE TRIALS OF THE SIEGE, CLOSING WITH A CONTRAST BETWEEN THE COMING OF THE FALSE MESSIAHS AND THE TRUE LIGHTNING-LIKE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN, 15–27.

15. *Abomination of desolation*—The

tion, spoken of by [r]Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, ([s]whoso readeth, let him understand,)

16 Then [t]let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him [u]which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And [v]woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

r Daniel 9. 27; 11. 31; 12. 11.
s Daniel 9. 23, 25.

t Prov. 22. 3; Jer. 6. 1.—u Deut. 22. 8.
v Luke 23. 29.

desolating abomination. The Roman army, which was an *abomination* as being pagan, and *desolating* as being conquering and devastating. *Stand in the holy place*—Luke says: "When ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies." Mark says: "When ye shall see the abomination, etc., stand where it ought not." The amount of the whole would be, that Christians must understand that the beleaguering of the city by the Romans was a sign for flight. They must not for one moment cherish the hope of the false deluders, that the Jews would conquer. By the holy place the temple is usually understood; and such is its meaning here.

Daniel the prophet—Our Lord here testifies against some who call themselves Christians, and yet profess to doubt the authenticity of the prophecies of Daniel. Our Lord also authorizes us to hold the celebrated passage in Daniel ix, 27, as predictive of his own times. (*Whoso readeth, let him understand*)—This seems a warning of the evangelist to his Christian reader to note the admonition to escape.

16. *Let them which be in Judea*—In the country and provincial towns and cities of Judea. When they shall see the Roman army, with its eagles and idolatrous images of the emperor standing at the very temple gates, let them know that the desolating abomination will soon be subduing and slaughtering in their own vicinity, and so let them escape to the mountains, where armies cannot follow them. Ecclesiastical history informs us that no Christians perished in the siege of Jerusalem. When the Roman general Cestius Gallus invested the city, and thus furnished the sign for the Christians' flight, he again withdrew his armies, and thus, as if unconsciously overruled, gave the Christians full chance for escape. Warned by our Lord, they fled to a city called Pella, beyond the Jordan, and survived to hand the Gospel to future times.

17. *On the housetop not come down*—Our Lord is here still describing the troubles in the country, after the downfall of the city. He is drawing vivid pictures of the pursuit of Jews by the Romans by single instances and examples. For instance, many a man may be on the housetop when a pursuer arrives, and his best way is to rush down the stairs on the outside of the house without stopping to take anything from the inside. The stairs often also descended within, but near the porch so that the fugitive could escape without entering the rooms. Or he might escape by crossing neighbouring roofs.

18. *In the field...clothes*—The labourer may be at work in the field, and so sudden may be the rush of the foes upon him that he must escape in his light labouring dress.

19. *Woe...with child...give suck*—Both the Jewish and the Christian female. The former would find their sufferings redoubled in the miseries of their offspring; the latter would find redoubled the difficulty of escape.

20. *In the winter*—Or season of storms, when you or your family may perish from the inclemency. *On the Sabbath*—The gates of Jewish cities were shut

21 For [w]then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: [x]but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

23 [y]Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24 For [z]there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, [a]if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

w Daniel 9. 26; 12. 1; Joel 2. 2.——*x* Isaiah 65. 8, 9; Zech. 14. 2, 3; Romans 11. 5, 7.——*y* Mark 13. 21; Luke 17. 23; 21. 8.

z Deuteronomy 13. 1; ver. 5, 11; 2 Thessalonians 2. 9, 10, 11; Revelation 13. 13.——*a* John 6. 37, 10. 28, 29; Romans 8. 28-30; 2 Timothy 2. 19.

on the Sabbath, and so their flight might be arrested. Neh. xiii, 19–22. The Jews might hinder them by requiring them to travel no more than a Sabbath day's journey, which was but five furlongs.

21. *Great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world*—That is, in Jewish history. Yet the statement of Josephus would warrant a stronger interpretation than this. "Our city," says he, "of all those subjugated to the Romans, was raised to the highest felicity, and was thrust down again to the lowest depth of misery. For if the misfortunes of all from the beginning of the world were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear much inferior in the comparison."

It is important to note that this term "tribulation" covers, according to this verse, not merely the incipient parts of the downfall, but its height and close also. The "tribulation" which was the severest part of human history, must have been the severest part of the whole series of woes, and that was the late and latest stages. It is also evident from the fact that the Roman eagles are already in the temple in the fifteenth verse, and the consequences of that decisive event are the subject of the verses following, including this twenty-first verse and farther. The *tribulation* is then a term embracing the whole process of the downfall and desolation of Jerusalem.

22. *Those days should be shortened*—That is, terminated. Prevented from a perpetual continuance. *Should no flesh be saved*—Of the slaughtered Jewish nation. *But for the elect's sake*—For the sake of the Christians among the Jews. This elect band were to be preserved, in order that the Gospel might be handed down to future ages.

23–27. Our Lord now proceeds to give such warnings as should protect his followers from being deluded by false Christs, which should appear. *Their* coming would be on earth, while his next advent will be in the sky, like the lightnings flashing along the firmament.

23. *Lo, here is Christ*—The notion that the coming of Christ would be at the destruction of Jerusalem, was liable to lead them to credit the false deliverers, by which the Jews were deluded in immense numbers to their own destruction.

24. *Signs and wonders*—Our Lord does not affirm here that any of these signs and wonders would be truly miraculous. *If it were possible*—They would do it if they were able. *Deceive the very elect*—Who have been previously forewarned by me, and are therefore beyond the reach of their deceptions. They are called *elect*, as being, in consequence of their faith in Christ, most specially selected from the Jewish nation, to be saved from the general destruction. They were God's chosen ones, whom it was impossible for the juggling false Christs to deceive.

25. *Behold, I have told you before*—And therefore it shall be impossible to deceive you, my elect.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

27 [b]For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 [c]For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

b Luke 17. 24.

c Job 39. 30; Luke 17. 37.

26. *Believe it not*—For my second coming is not of this earthly or terrestrial nature. We may here remark, that if the following verse is to be interpreted allegorically, as many commentators at the present day interpret it, it could be no protection against the wiles of false Christs. If the coming were invisible or figurative, and might be fulfilled in the Roman armies, or in Titus, why not in some promising heroic Jewish deliverer in the midst of the siege.

The contrast is between the personal coming of a false Christ and the personal advent of the true Christ. The one would be earthly and lurking; the other celestial and lightninglike, from east to west.

The common view would make the contrast lie between the coming of false Christs and the coming of the Roman armies! The former secret, the latter like lightning from heaven!

27. *As the lightning...out of east... unto the west*—May we not suppose that the unspeakable splendour of the Son of man (constituting the visible *sign*, as mentioned in verse thirtieth) will be suspended in the heaven during the entire of one revolution of the earth, so that its flash should extend from east to west, and be visible on all sides of the globe to the alarmed and watching nations? We thus discover in this paragraph one more contrast between the *these things* of the apostles' first question, and the *end* of the world as specified in the second question.

IV. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE LENGTHENED CALAMITIES OF THE JEWS THROUGH AGES, AND THE SUDDEN CONSUMMATION OF THE END, 28–31.

After the tribulation of Jerusalem's destruction, a long train of calamities follows till a later day of restoration. And then after the *tribulation* of the later day the world shall be dissolved.

28. *For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles*—It is perfectly obvious that this verse stands in isolation, having no clear connection with what precedes or follows. The *for* which commences this verse clearly refers to nothing in verse 27; while in our harmonizing below its reference is natural and convincing.

We may suggest that this arises from the fact that the sentence is but a part, which Matthew has preserved, of a passage which Luke presents more fully, in which the long train of calamities which succeeds the downfall of Jerusalem is briefly sketched, in order to present a contrast with the rapid consummation of the end.

If, in the usual manner of the harmonists, we incorporate Matthew and Luke together in this passage, it will read thus: "There shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword; for wheresoever the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered together. And they shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." On this passage we may remark,

1. That it traces with great clearness the sad train of wars which succeed the "*these things*" of the apostles' question. Massacres and slaughters there would be at various periods, wherever the Roman army could find with its standard eagles a body of Jews, as an eagle finds a carcass; the dispersion through nations; the subjection of Jerusalem until a time of latter-day restoration.

29 ¶ [d]Immediately after the tribulation of those days [e]shall

d Daniel 7. 11, 12.—*e* Isaiah 13. 10; 24. 21, 23; Ezekiel 32. 7; Joel 2. 2, 10, 31; 3. 15; Amos 5. 20; 8. 9; Mark 13. 24; Luke 21. 25; Acts 2. 20; Revelation 6. 12.

2. The *eagles* are no doubt in some sense an allusion to the images of eagles which were upon the standards of the Roman armies. Yet not directly. It would be more correct perhaps to say that the adoption of the eagles by armies for their standard, and the adoption of the term by our Lord to designate the pitiless enemy falling upon his prey, are founded in the same natural symbol. Yet the coincidence is of the most striking character.

3. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down" is a phrase of the most abject subjection; but history furnishes its complete fulfillment. "The times of the Gentiles" are the times of Gentile pre-eminence in the kingdom of God. It is the period of the more exclusive Gentile Churchdom, lasting during the casting off of Israel until her restoration.

4. This brings us to the very millennial threshhold, when Israel is restored, and ages of Gospel reign commence. These millennial ages terminate in the *tribulation* of *those days*, and an immediate judgment, as described in the twenty-ninth verse.

5. This passage, as above harmonized, furnishes the first member of the contrast of which the second member is furnished in verses 29–31.

29. *Immediately after the tribulation of those days*—The words *those days* here refer to the latter days, implied in the passage in Luke above quoted, of which Matthew has preserved but a fragment. The *those days* of this verse, then, are the *days* of the great period of which *the eagles and the carcass* in the preceding verse are a fragmentary symbol. This symbol is a broken label of the whole period between the downfall and the advent, Luke supplying the condensed remainder of the label. The *contrast* lies between the *slow expansion* of that period and the *suddenness* of the *advent* to break and close it. Immediately, suddenly, after the "tribulation" following the *those days* of the treading down of Jerusalem, and the fulness of the Gentiles, shall the advent take place.

We have already shown that a *tribulation* before the judgment was a doctrine of the Jews, as well as that of the Scripture. See the note on Mark xiii, 24–27.

Thus the *tribulation* and *destruction* of Jerusalem, and the *tribulation* and *judgment day*, are parallel if not mutually typical.

This view is sustained by the parallel passage in Mark. His words are: "In those days, after that tribulation." This language is inconsistent with the idea that the judgment immediately succeeds the *tribulation* of Jerusalem's downfall.

The judgment is broadly described as being *in those days* after the Jerusalem tribulation. The *those days* of Mark may, by perspective, be made to cover the entire time of the dispersion, as described by Luke. So Bengel, and so Mr. Wesley has rendered Mark's words. And we may here remark that the common interpretation, which makes Matthew xxiv, 29 figurative, has no countenance from Mr. Wesley. His comment is thus on Mark xiii, 24: "*But in those days*—Which immediately preceded the end of the world. *After that tribulation*—Above described." We may add that the translators of our version have omitted the word *but* or *and* before the word "immediately" in Matt. xxiv, 29. Combining then the words of both Mark and Matthew, we should have: "But in those days, after that tribulation—and immediately after the tribulation of those days—the sun shall be darkened," etc. The whole contrast, then, of the paragraph would be as follows: "There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, for wheresoever the carcass is there shall the eagles be gathered together. And they shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles,

until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. But in those days after that tribulation, and immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon," etc.

This precise verbal adjustment, however, of Matthew and Mark, though apparently satisfactory, need not be insisted upon as necessary to our interpretation of the general passage.

Those who find it difficult to extend our Lord's discourse over "a chasm" of centuries may be aided by the following points:

1. Our supplementary note, p. 301, shows that the leap of thought and language over the chasm of time to the judgment day is required in a whole class of passages; and will show, too, the principle upon which the leap is taken.

2. Our Lord's words were intentionally susceptible of expansion and contraction so far as time was concerned, on the very principle that the true extension of time was even to himself unknown. He specifies events, not periods; events of unknown duration. How long or short should be the "fall by the edge of the sword," or the "captivity among all the nations," or the "times of the Gentiles," or the later "tribulation of those days," or the time in which the "gospel should be preached to all nations" before the final tribulation, he does not say. "*Immediately after*" this train of events the advent will take place; but the length of that train, like the whole scale of ante-judgment chronology, is professedly *unknown*.

29–31. We have obviously here a picture of the visible phenomena of the heavens, etc., at the visible appearance of Christ to judgment. As this whole passage has been allegorically interpreted, not only by Universalist commentators, but, what is much to be regretted, by many orthodox, we remark:

First. This entire passage (29–31) is evidently the fore part, of which xxv, 31–46 is the after part. Printed together, they are one continued narrative. They are both of a piece. They are one picture of one transaction, to be encased in the same frame. If either is figurative both are figurative. If either is literal both are literal. See more fully, comment on xxv, 31–46.

Secondly. This passage (29–31) embraces some six particular events: 1. The visible firmamental convulsions; 2. The *sign* of Christ's coming; 3. The visible Judge; 4. The consequent wailing of the tribes of the earth; 5. The angels with the trumpet sound; 6. The gathering of the elect. None of these things took place at the destruction of Jerusalem, nor any literal events worthy to be described in these terms.

Thirdly. The contenders for a figurative interpretation quote instances of similar language, as they think, used in the Old Testament figuratively, as Isaiah xiii, 9; Ezekiel xxxii, 7. But these passages are very poor parallels indeed; they simply describe an obscuration of the heavens, such as takes place when smoke or vapour fills the concave, as at an earthquake, or conflagration of a great city. Such passages present at best but the *first* of the above *six* particulars. In fact, they are far from filling out that. These false parallels describe an obscuration of the heavens; the present passage, a sensible convulsion of earth and heaven, with an outline of specific and peculiar events. Let any one study the clear specific import of the *last five* of the *six* particulars, (of which the first is a comparatively unimportant prelude,) and say whether anything in the supposed parallels quoted from the prophets at all meets this case. These five particulars are plainly an organic part with xxv, 31–46.

Fourthly. The suddenness of the event described in this passage is the entire point illustrated by 36–51. The suddenness of the judgment advent is one of the points frequently asserted in the New Testament. But the destruction of Jerusalem was not a sudden, but a very slow, long foreseen, well forewarned event. There was no suddenness or surprise about it. The war slowly approached; the city was gradually surrounded with an overpowering force; post after post was painfully

the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 [f]And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: [g]and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, [h]and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 [i]And he shall send his angels [1]with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather

[f] Daniel 7. 13.—[g] Zechariah 12. 12.—[h] Chap. 16. 27; Mark 13. 26; Rev. 1. 7.

[i] Chap. 13. 41; 1 Corinthians 15. 52; 1 Thess. 4. 16

1 Or, *with a trumpet and a great voice.*

taken, and there was no particular day on which the downfall could be dated. We might lay it down as a canon of interpretation, that whatever expresses slow and protracted process is to be applied to the destruction; but whatever expresses the sudden and the unforewarned is to be applied to the advent.

Fifthly. Some commentators defend the allegorical interpretation by finding here what they call a double sense. Both great events they think are described in the same language. Now we admit that prophecy does sometimes describe one event in terms that allusively picture another event. But the language ought in such case, when reduced to literality, not to express falsehood. Now if this passage describes the destruction of Jerusalem, it does contradict the truth of history. It describes it as a sudden incalculable event. History contradicts such prophecy.

Sixthly. If this passage be figurative, where do we find a literal description of the judgment day? If this be poetry, where is the prose of the matter? What passage describes or announces that event which may not be with equal propriety reduced to figure? This may not be an argument to the truth of the case; but it is an argument to the consistency of interpreters who believe in a judgment day, and yet reduce its strongest proof-text to a mysticism.

Seventhly. We have shown in our note on verse 21 that the term *tribulation* covers the entire period of Jewish downfall. But the firmamental phenomena were *after* that tribulation, and were no part of it, and had no connection with it, except to be some time subsequent to it. For Mark says that those phenomena take place "in those days which are after that tribulation." They do not commence until a while after the tribulation has passed away. See note on Mark xiii, 24–27. This I take to be demonstration.

The sun be darkened—These firmamental appearances are optically pictured as seen by the eye of the human spectator. These phenomena are visible previous to the *sign* of the Judge, which is described in the next verse. As that great event is to be attended by the conflagration and renovation of the earth, (2 Peter iii, and Rev. xx,) so the organic convulsions and exhalations of the globe will darken the skies. To the eye of the spectator on the rocking earth *the stars shall*, optically, *fall from heaven;* and the ocular firmamental fixtures or *powers of the heavens shall be shaken.* The *real motion* is upon the earth; the apparent motion in the apparent firmament.

30. *The sign*—The token, the visible *glory* preceding the distinguishable *person* of the Son of man. The *sign* of his presence will appear before the *outline of his form* can be descried *Tribes mourn* because they *see* him, for his person soon becomes visible after the pomp of his glory has announced him.

31. *Send his angels*—To call the nations before his throne, where on different sides they all appear before him. 25–32. Angels are ever described as attending the judgment presence. Matt. xiii, 40; Rev. i, 7; 1 Thess. iv, 16. *Gather...his elect*—Separately, in a glorious resurrection order, both living and dead, at Christ's right hand. Afterward the wicked are in like manner

together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn [k] a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know

[k] Luke 21. 29.

taken, perhaps by evil angels, to the left of the judge. The separation will be awfully sudden, as described in verses 40, 41. *From the four winds*—The ancient mode of describing the entire globe was by the number *four;* as the earth was held to consist of *four* quarters, to be subject to the *four* points of compass, from which the *four winds* blowing are so called.

Thus the grand prelude is prepared, to be continued and consummated at chap. xxv, 31–46.

But before proceeding to that finishing of the picture, our Lord pauses to illustrate what he has given, by parabolic images. In the remainder of this chapter, in contrast with the slow approach of the destruction of Jerusalem, he illustrates the unexpectedness of the advent to a revelling world by the parallel of *the flood;* its suddenness to the revelling individual by the parable of the *drunken servant.* In the next chapter he illustrates its inflexible suddenness to the sleeping dead by the *slumbering virgins;* its graduated justice to each man's character by the *talents;* and then, closing chapter xxv, does the END come.

V.—THE CALCULABILITY OF THE DESTRUCTION AND DOWNFALL CONTRASTED WITH THE INCALCULABLE SUDDENNESS OF THE END, 32–41.

This paragraph is divisible into two halves, namely, 32–35 and 36–41, which lie in contrast against each other. The two subjects in antithesis are THESE THINGS, on one side, and THAT DAY AND HOUR, on the other. The matter of contrast is that the *former* is a slow and graduated *process*, in which one step presages the other to the close; the *latter* is a sudden, unwarned *event*, of which the subjects *knew not until it came.* The *former* is illustrated mainly by the fig-tree, slowly maturing into its summer ripeness; the *latter* by the flood instantly descending upon its unsuspecting victims.

The former half paragraph is historically true of the destruction of Jerusalem. It was forewarned and indicated at every step; and so gradual was the process that no particular *day or hour* can be assigned to it. The latter half paragraph is as distinctively in accordance with all prophecy of the judgment day. It hardly seems necessary for us to prove here that suddenness, *like a thief in the night*, is the uniform attribute ascribed to that event. We should suppose it equally unnecessary to show how opposite is the illustration drawn from the fig tree.

32. *A parable of the fig tree*—More literally, Learn *the* parable *from* the fig tree. The fig is a native product of the East, and grows in spontaneous plenty in Palestine. In a warm climate fruit forms a very large proportion of customary food, and hence the fruit tree is a favourite source for illustration. Our Lord spoke this upon the Mount of Olives, where fig trees were growing all round him. He was near to Bethphage, (or Fig-ville,) so called, probably, from the abundance of this product. It was now about the twenty-third day of March, and though *the time of figs was not yet*, the trees were doubtless beginning to verify the words by opening signs of the season. Dr. Thomson, on sight of a fig tree leafing forth March 21, explains its maturity from the fact that it was in a sheltered spot, where summer comes early. *Branch is yet tender*—By the rising of the sap from the roots, rendering the branch succulent. *Putteth forth leaves*—The fig tree puts forth no visible blossom; the fruit should accompany the mature leaf.

33. *These things*—The *these things* specified in the apostle's question. ver. 3.

[l]that [2]it is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, [m]This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 [n]Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 ¶ [o]But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, [p]but my Father only.

l James 5. 9.——2 Or, *he*.——*m* Chapter 16. 28; 23. 36; Mark 13. 30; Luke 21. 32.——*n* Psalm 102. 26; Isaiah 51. 6; Jeremiah 31. 35, 36; chapter 5. 18; Mark 13. 31; Luke 21. 33; Hebrews 1. 11.
o Mark 13. 32; Acts 1. 7; 1 Thessalonians 5. 2, 2 Peter 3. 10.——*p* Zechariah 14. 7.

It is near—There is no supplied antecedent to this *it*. The meaning, however, is plain. When ye see the train of calamitous events passing successively before your eyes, know that the ruin which is included in the train is *near*. *At the doors*—Like the Roman at the portal of the temple.

34. *This generation shall not pass till all* THESE THINGS *be fulfilled*—This celebrated verse has been quoted by many orthodox expositors, indeed by their great body in modern times, to show that all the events named in the discourse thus far take place in that generation. Certainly this cannot be true of Luke xxi, 24, for the events of that verse did not transpire during that generation. We trust that we have made it plain that the *these things* of this verse are simply the answer to the *these things* inquired about by the disciples in verse third. They ask when *these things* shall be. He is now prepared to answer: *These things shall be* before *this present generation* passes. But the *these things* of the question only comprehend the overthrow of the city and temple. This is identical with the *these things* of the thirty-third verse.

Precisely parallel to this verse is chapter xxiii, 36: "Verily I say unto you, *all these things* shall come upon *this generation*." And by the *these things* of that verse plainly were meant the destruction of the city and state. And this parallelism, it might be remarked by the way, goes to show the incorrectness of the interpretation which some have adopted, by which the word *generation* is made to signify *race*. Were it to signify *race*, what *race* is indicated by this race? It might mean the human *race*, or the Jewish *race*, or the Christians, as Dr. Clarke supposes; and thus we are thrown into a state of perfect vagueness. But this rendering of the word has met with but little favour among scholars.

Of the overthrow of the temple, the disciples ask: "When shall THESE THINGS be?" Of that same event the Lord replies, after giving its full attendant details: "This generation shall not pass till all THESE THINGS be fulfilled."

35. *My words shall not pass*—That is, his predictions of the catastrophe so early as in that generation. Not only would the temple, Jerusalem, the Jewish state pass away, but even heaven and earth would pass rather than his prediction fail.

36. *But*—In contrast to this approaching and calculable catastrophe. *Of that day and hour*—The word *day* is a minutely specified point of time; the word *hour* is more specific still. *Knoweth no man*—Our Lord here will indicate even his own ignorance of the time of the judgment day. What wonder, then, that his inspired apostles should confess an equal ignorance! See supplemtary note to next chapter. Prof. Owen says that, as man, Jesus might be as ignorant of the day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem as of the judgment day. But unfortunately there was no *day* or *hour* to that destruction which could be ignored. It was a diffusive series. Our Lord, however, could be ignorant of the time of the destruction of Jerusalem only as he was ignorant of every future event; and so it would follow that he was ignorant of the judgment day only as he was ignorant of every future event. But that view stands in positive contradiction to the solemn emphasis with which it is the clear purpose of

37 But as the days of Noah *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 [q]For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 [r]Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one

q Gen. 6. 3-5; 7. 5; Luke 17. 26.

r 1 Peter 3. 20. — Luke 17. 34, &c.

this verse to affirm that the judgment day is unknown to every being below God the Father Almighty.

For reply to the argument drawn from this passage against the divinity of Christ, see Mark xiii, 32.

37. *Days of Noe*—Noah. The same illustration is used in 2 Pet. iii, 5, 6, and the parallelism shows that it is the judgment day alone that is the present subject. *Coming of the Son of man*—The word *coming* here is *parousia*, which we hold in all cases in the New Testament to signify a *bodily presence*. The suddenness of the flood here is in contrast with the graduality of the leafing forth of the fig tree. We are utterly at a loss to comprehend the interpretation which would hold the *coming of the Son of man* in these (37 and 38) verses not to be identical with the coming of the Son of man in verses 27, 30, and 46, and with chap. xxv, 13, and 31.

38. *Eating and drinking*—That is, were going on in the regular and unsuspecting current of life. *Marrying and giving in marriage*—Expecting a distant posterity. The words do not necessarily imply special wickedness, but perfect security, anticipating no coming doom. *Until the day*—Narrowing the time to a point. No such *day* of unexpected and surprising doom came to Jerusalem or the Jewish state. Never did a city or nation die more truly by inches. There was no *day* of ruin, no *hour* of surprise.

Thus far the imagery has illustrated the judgment surprise upon the mass of mankind. Two images now, in the two following verses, illustrate the surprise upon individuals.

40. *Then shall two be in the field*—See comment on verse 31. The suddenness of separation at the judgment day is here most strikingly described. *Two*—One is a Christian, the other is a sinner. The holy angels come and snatch one, to bear him to the right hand of Christ. The other is left, to be borne by evil angels to his doom at the left hand.

41. *Two women*—A similar image in

regard to the female sex, for both shall alike pass the judgment test. *Grinding at the mill*—Meal was ground anciently between two stones, one being laid up

shall be taken, and the other left.

42 ¶ [s] Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 [t] But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 [u] Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 [x] Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 [y] Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

s Chap. 25. 13; Mark 13. 33; Luke 21. 36.—*t* Luke 12. 39; 1 Thess. 5. 2; 2 Pet. 3. 10; Rev. 3. 3; 16. 15.

u Chap. 25. 13; 1 Thess. 5. 6.—*x* Luke 12. 42; Acts 20. 28; 1 Cor. 4. 2; Heb. 3. 5.—*y* Rev. 16. 15.

on the other to crush the grain between them by friction. The stones were often turned by women.

42. *Watch therefore... Lord doth come*—The same *coming* as in verse 39. They must not be like the world in the time of the flood, slumbering and revelling; but watch, for it will be a sudden event.

42–51. As the image of the flood illustrates the suddenness of the *second coming* to the careless *world*, so the image of the householder and the waiting servant illustrates its suddenness to the careless *individual*. Dr. Owen remarks that "here is an easy transition from the destruction of Jerusalem to the judgment day." It would certainly puzzle any commentator to do, what he does not attempt, namely, show that the *coming* of the Lord in verse 42 was not the same as in verse 44, or to show that both were not the same as in verses 39, 37, 30, and 27. It would puzzle him to show what common sense there is in making our Lord's *answer* talk about a different *coming* from the disciples' *question*.

43. *Good man of the house*—That is, *householder* simply. The word *good* implies here no moral character. *In what watch*—If the *householder* had had been warned, as you are warned, that the thief would come. Especially he would watch if he knew at what *watch* of the night. Entire life is the hour of probation. It is the watch time in which you are to be on the alert for the coming of the Son of man.

44. *Therefore be ye also ready*—As, like the householder, ye know not at what hour, or at which watch, the spoiler will come, so all the night is watch time. *Be ye*, like the householder, at all time ready. For the individual death is the virtual coming of the Son of man. Not that the coming of the Son of man here is death, nor truly to be identified with death; but the being on the watch for judgment is pressed instead of the being on the watch for death, inasmuch as death is nothing but a passage to judgment. If a man live in preparation for judgment he is in preparation for death. Death is simply a transition into the world where retribution reigns, and where the virtual judgment throne of Christ is in spirit continually in session.

45. *Servant*—Our Lord now slightly changes the image from a householder watching for the thief, to a servant waiting for his master.

The family here is properly the Church of God, considered as a great congregation, through all ages, waiting for the coming of Christ. It is that Church of all ages to whom he said of the Lord's supper: "Ye do show forth the Lord's death until he come." The *servant* seems to be more specially the *ministry* of Christ through the ages; to whom he said: "Lo, I am with you until the end of the world."

46. *When he cometh*—To the judgment, the same *coming* as verses 3, 27 29, 30, etc.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall [a] say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellow servants, [b] and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The Lord of that servant shall [c] come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall [3] cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: [d] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

CHAPTER XXV.

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps,

[a] Chapter 25. 21, 23; Luke 22. 29.——*a* Deuteronomy 15. 9; 2 Kings 5. 26; John 13. 2; Acts 5. 3. [b] 1 Samuel 2. 13. 15; Ezekiel 34. 3; Philippians 3. 19; Jude 12.——*c* Proverbs 29. 1; 1 Thessalonians 5. 2, 3; Revelation 3. 3.——[3] Or, *cut him off*.——*d* Chapter 8. 12; 25. 30.

47. *Ruler over all his goods*—Simply, the image of the favour of his master, drawn from the custom of appointing a competent or favourite servant to be head steward, as was Joseph in the house of Potiphar.

48. *My lord delayeth his coming*—There is a clear allusion to the *coming* of Christ to judgment implied under all these symbolical expressions of its conceptual nearness, yet real distance.

49. *Shall begin to smite*—The language is taken from the disposition of servants to be unruly and fighting in the long absence of their master, especially if all sense of responsibility is forgotten. In different ages of the Church popes and prelates have tyrannized over their fellows, as if they were never to be called by the Lord to account for their doings. Because sentence was not speedily executed by the immediate *coming* of the Son of man, they set themselves to do all manner of evil.

51. *Cut him asunder*—Separating perhaps head from body; or, in the ancient mode, sawing asunder. *Portion*—Or place. *Hypocrites*—Because he was a *false* servant to his Lord.

CHAPTER XXV.

Tuesday of Passion Week.

PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS, 1–13.

In the parable of the waiting servant, who said, "My lord delayeth his coming," in the last chapter, our Lord had hinted the idea that the real time of his coming, though veiled under terms of immediateness, might be more distant than the words literally expressed. The present parable brings that intimation into a more prominent view. The *virgins* who *sleep* while the *bridegroom tarrieth*, are the generations of mankind who slumber in death, waiting for the judgment day. This parable, therefore, states the relation of death to the judgment. We are not so much to prepare for death as to prepare for the judgment; since preparation for judgment is preparation for death. Although the Son of man may come while we are living, he may not come until we have slumbered for ages the sleep of death. But if we have not the *oil* of the grace of God in the *lamp* of our hearts, there will be no remedy at the final day. Hence preparation for judgment must be made before death; and preparation for judgment is preparation for death; and preparation for death is preparation for judgment.

1. *Then*—At the judgment day. *Ten virgins*—Ten unmarried females. The fact that they are called *virgins* does not imply that they represent a holy character. The word simply means *maidens*, and such are selected because such performed the illustrative part in wedding performances. Hence they may be considered as representing all probationary human beings. The number *ten* is selected as probably the usual number of bridesmaids; as it seems that ten was a usual number of proces-

and went forth to meet [a]the bridegroom.

2 [b]And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, [c]they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight [d]there was a cry made, Behold, the bride-

a Eph. 5. 29, 30; Rev. 19. 7; 21. 2. 9.
b Chap. 13. 47; 22. 10.

c 1 Thess. 5. 6.—*d* Chap. 24. 31. 1 Thess. 4. 16.

sion lamps. *Went forth...bridegroom*—The bridegroom, with his bride, is coming from her residence to his, where the nuptials will be performed. The ten maidens or virgins are to be met either at his house or some position in his route home.

2. *Five...wise...five...foolish*—As their conduct demonstrated. This is not to be taken as an indication of the comparative number of the saved and the lost.

3. *Lamps*—Rabbi Solomo is thus quoted by Wetstein: "It was the custom in the land of Ishmael to bring the bride from the house of her father to that of her husband in the night time; and there were about ten staffs; upon the top of each was a brazen dish, containing rags, oil, and pitch, and this being kindled formed blazing torches, which were carried before the bride."

4. *Oil in their vessels*—Each virgin besides her lamp, or rather torch, had an oil can with which to replenish the lamp.

5. *The bridegroom tarried*—While the judgment day remained in the distance. It is a view on which the New Testament is emphatic, and which false interpretation at the present day has very much obscured, that the final judge is ready, is waiting, is on the point of coming, and so is to be expected, to be looked for, to be prepared for.

They all slumbered and slept—The living wait for the Son of man in life; the dead in death.

The following extract from Ward's View of the Hindoos will in some degree illustrate the circumstances of this parable: "At a marriage the procession of which I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived at Serampore, to which place *the bridegroom was to come by water*. After waiting two hours, at length, *near midnight*, it was announced, as if in the very words of Scripture, '*Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.*' All the persons employed now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession; some of them had lost their lamps, and were unprepared, and it was then too late to seek them, and the cavalcade moved forward to the house of the bride, at which place the company entered a large and splendidly illuminated area before the house, covered with an awning, where a great multitude of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated upon mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of a friend and placed upon a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a short time and then went into the house, the door of which was immediately shut and guarded by sepoys. I and others expostulated with the doorkeeper, but in vain. Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable as at this moment. 'And the door was shut!' I was exceedingly anxious to be present while the marriage formulas were repeated, but was obliged to depart in disappointment."

In this case the nuptials took place at the bride's house; in the case of the parable *at the bridegroom's;* as appears from the foolish virgins being excluded by him. Verse 12.

6. *At midnight*—In the very depth of the shades of *time*. This slumber by no means implies the unconsciousness of the souls of the dead. It implies that the day of probationary life has completely closed. Those who sleep with the oil in their lamps are happy

groom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and [e]trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are [1]gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so;* [f]lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and [g]the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, [h]Lord, Lord, open to us.

e Luke 12. 35.—1 Or, *going out.*—*f* Psalm 49. 7; Jeremiah 15. 1; Ezekiel 14. 14, 16, 18.
g Luke 13. 25. *h* Chap. 7. 21-23.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours; and their works of faith and repentance follow them into the future, to render them blessed. Rev. xiv, 13. To them the judgment day will not seem distant; for it will not be tedious waiting, though that day is to be the full consummation of their bliss. Ages will be but as moments. As in some clear and beautiful atmospheres distant objects seem near at hand, so in the blessed air of the paradise of pure spirits the coming of the Judge, though it should be ages on ages distant, is, in full accordance with the phrases of Scripture, close at hand. To the restless spirits of the wicked it will be distant when their mind's eye looks over the vast length of unrest to be endured before that day; but it will even to them seem terribly near when they contemplate the terrors of the day itself and the woes that shall follow. *There was a cry made*—By the narrative which we have given from Mr. Ward, it may be supposed that this cry was an ordinary fact at weddings; and so may be considered no significant part of the parable. It may have been the cry of self-announcement from the bridegroom's party, or of waiting spectators, or of the virgins rousing each other. It does not contradict the fact that the coming of the Son of man is unwarned. It is more properly to be considered as identical with the blast of the last trumpet, announcing that the day of grace is past, and that the judgment day is come. More properly still, it is the cry of conscious confession and despair echoing through the world, that THE JUDGE COMETH and we must meet our doom.

7. *Virgins arose*—The generations of the dead wake at the resurrection. *Trimmed their lamps*—For now the time hath come for them to shine in eternal glory.

8. *Give us of your oil*—Here is expressed, in dialogue form, the fearful condition of the soul that wakes in eternity without the grace of God. He finds his own case deficient. He looks to others for aid. Alas! he that is wise is wise for himself, and he that scorneth alone must bear it.

9. *Lest there be not enough for us*—Here is a striking denial of the Romish doctrine of supererogation, by which the merits of particular saints may by surplus save other persons. The righteous are scarcely saved. After we have done all, we are unprofitable servants. We are saved not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by the merits of the Lord our righteousness. *Go ye rather to them that sell*—This is added to show how utterly too late it is. The *wise* give the only counsel that thought can devise, but it is a plain impossibility. The judgment is too near, and the remedy is beyond all reach.

10. *And the door was shut*—As the door of heaven must be closed to all who are arrested by the sleep of death before they have secured peace with God.

11. *Lord, open to us*—It is not to be supposed that there is to be any literal application by the lost at the door of heaven for admission. But the Saviour here puts in dialogue form the utter

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, [i] I know you not.

13 [j] Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

14 ¶ [k] For *the kingdom of heaven is* [l] as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; [m] to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

i Psalm 5. 5; Habakkuk 1. 13; John 9. 31. *j* Chapter 24. 42, 44; Mark 13. 33; Luke 21. 36; 1 Corinthians 16. 13; 1 Thess. 5. 6; 1 Peter 5. 8; Revelation 16. 15.—*k* Mark 13. 34; Luke 19. 12-27.—*l* Chapter 21. 33.—*m* Romans 12. 6; 1 Corinthians 12. 7, 11, 29; Ephesians 4. 11.

hopelessness that would attend such an application, as conceived in thought. It is then too late for prayer.

12. *I know you not*—You call me Lord as if you were my servants, when in fact we are strangers. You have never gained my acquaintance. I recognize you not, and forever dismiss you as pretenders.

13. *Watch therefore...day nor the hour*—Watch through your life, for you will certainly watch in the spirit-world.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS, 14–30.

The parable of the virgins illustrates the watch for the judgment in life or in death; so the parable of the talent teaches the duty of working while the day lasts.

14. *Man travelling into a far country*—Our Lord ascending into heaven, until he comes to judge the quick and the dead. *His own servants*—The slaves of antiquity were frequently educated men, trained to the various kinds of business, and who toiled for the benefit of their masters.

15. *Five talents...according to his several ability*—The word talents has acquired in our language, doubtless from this parable, the meaning of abilities. Yet this is not the meaning of the word in the parable. For the talents are said to be conferred *according to their ability*. The talent is plainly a trust to be discharged; a responsibility to be met. And every man in probation has a charge and office; and that task God imposes in proportion to our ability.

16. *Made them other five talents*—As we say a man makes money. His five talents were a high duty to perform, proportioned to his high ability. The five other talents is an amount of good he had accomplished by his discharge of his task in life. He may have been a minister in the Church of God, and faithfully discharged his office. He may have been a wealthy man, on whom rested an office for distributing to the good of man and the glory of God, and that duty he may have liberally done. God requireth of man according to his ability. He may have been a magistrate, and have well discharged the duty of guarding the morals and peace of society.

18. *Received one*—His duties were not as responsible as those of the man of five, yet he discharged them less faithfully. *Hid his lord's money*—He buried his responsibility to heaven under a load of earth. He merged the celestial in the terrestrial. He sunk *duty* in *selfishness*.

19. *After a long time*—We have here an intimation that the judgment day

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, [n]I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into [o]the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

23 His lord said unto him, [p]Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, [q]I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou

n Chap. 24. 47; ver. 34, 46; Luke 12. 44; 22. 29, 30.
o 2 Tim. 2. 12; Heb. 12. 2; 1 Pet. 1. 8.

p Ver. 21.—*q* Job 21. 14, 16; Isa. 58. 3; Jer. 2. 31; Ezek. 18. 25, 29; Mal. 1. 12; Luke 19. 20, 22.

was very probably far distant. *Cometh*—The Son of man coming to judgment.

20. *Behold, I have gained*—With a sweet and cheerful boldness does the faithful servant come before his Lord. *Behold, I have gained*, as it is in Matthew; and, *Thy pound hath gained*, as it is in Luke. These united expressions show how man and God unite in the performance of Christian duty. But even in Matthew the servant recognizes that it is the five talents which *thou deliveredst unto me.*

21. *Well done*—For, though we are not saved for the merit of our works, (for our sins infinitely overbalance all our good,) yet having been forgiven all our sins by the merits of Christ, all that we have done of good, or avoided of evil, by faith in Christ, our final judge will applaud, and will view in it a merit which he will reward. *Few things... many things*—Their merits, at the most favorable reckoning, are few, and have to be rewarded with a surplus over their value. A small faithfulness has a plentiful reward. *Ruler over many things*—Or as it is in Luke xix, 17: *Have thou authority over ten cities.* The words are taken from Eastern customs. A monarch rewards a faithful servant with the government and revenues of a satrapy, or principality of a province, or of a certain number of cities. *Enter thou into the joy of thy lord*—The same favourite, rewarded with the rule and revenue of a distant province, shall reside in the palace of his lord, enjoying the felicity of his favour and sharing the happiness of his royalty.

24. *The one talent*—Our Lord does not mean by this, that men of inferior responsibilities are less likely to discharge them than those of higher. Men whose splendid abilities or means lade them with a mighty load of responsibilities, often make their very means an instrument, not only of unfaithfulness, but of great positive wickedness. Perhaps the smallness of the sum committed arose from the very smallness of his first moral value, and that same smallness of moral value he showed in his neglect. His talent was *one* because his ability was *little*, and because his heart and will were little.

24. *Hard man*—Very few men excuse their own sin without blaming God as a hard master. His religion is severe; he lays down too stern a morality; he exposes us to powerful temptation; he has established a humbling plan of salvation; he has not made the evidence of Christianity sufficiently clear; and in fine, he expects too much of men in the circumstances in which he has placed them. He would *reap* a harvest of requirements where he has not sowed sufficient means. The last clause is an allusion to the cleaning the wheat from

hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

29 [r]For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant [s]into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

r Chap. 13. 12; Mark 4. 25; Luke 8. 18; 19. 26; John 15. 2.—s Chap. 8. 12; 24. 51.

the chaff. Thou art a man, *gathering* the clean kernels *where thou hast not strewed* or winnowed with the fan. The verbs to *straw*, to *strow*, or to *strew*, are all but different orthographies of the same word, and are cognate with the Latin *sterno*, to *scatter*. The scattering here is that done in the winnowing alluded to chap. iii, 12.

25. *Was afraid*—There doubtless will many be damned from moral cowardice. The fearful as well as the unbelieving shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Rev. xxi, 8. *Thou hast that is thine*—I give you back all you gave me. I have done no harm. I am a very innocent man. I have destroyed nothing. We now are about even.

26. *Wicked and slothful servant*—The precise opposite of *good* and *faithful*. *Wicked* in self-exculpation, by calumniating his Lord. *Slothful* in neglecting his talent. *Thou knewest*—The master echoes the culprit, in order to condemn him on his own grounds. It is best understood as an interrogation: "You knew I was a hard man, did you?"

27. *Thou oughtest therefore*—In view of my very supposed hardness. Men sometimes think that the doctrine of eternal condemnation is too terrible to believe, and so refuse to believe or repent. The infinitely better way is to say, "The eternal damnation is so terrible I will make sure not to incur it." *Exchangers*—Brokers, or men whose business it is not only to give one kind of coin for another, but also to take money as loan and pay interest upon it. *Usury*—The word, in the time it was used by the New Testament translators, meant lawful interest. Our Lord then, in this verse, reasons with the culprit. If I am, as you say, a hard exacter, you ought at least to have done justice; if you dared not trade for fear of loss, you might at least have put the money in a savings bank, where a legal interest would have accrued. If a man will not in his place and according to his ability try to win laurels by extra good, he certainly may not damage his place by sinking below his ability, or by wasting what powers he has.

28. *Take therefore the talent from him*—Take from him all farther probation and chance for doing service.

29. *Unto every one that hath*—That hath the addition of talents resulting from faithful improvement of talents. *Hath not*—The gains of improvement. *Shall be taken away even* that first conferred talent *which he hath.*

30. *Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness*—This is the consummation of judgment Loss of all farther means of divine favour, and rejection from the life and glory of the divine presence. See note on Matt. viii. 12.

31 ¶ [t] When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And [u] before him shall be gathered all nations: and [v] he

[t] Zech. 14. 5; chap. 16. 27; 19. 28; Mark 8. 38; Acts 1. 11; 1 Thess. 4. 16; 2 Thess. 1. 7; Jude 14; Rev. 1. 7.—[u] Rom. 14. 10; 2 Cor. 5. 10; Rev. 20. 12.—[v] Ezek. 20. 38; 34. 17, 20; chap. 13. 49.

§ 119. PICTURE OF THE FINAL JUDGMENT, 31–46.

1. In the passage xxiv, 29–31, the introductory circumstances of the judgment day are described. But as they are there introduced for a given purpose, namely, to contrast the sudden shock of that day with the slow process of the destruction of Jerusalem, the Lord suspends the conclusion in order to attend to other points of the contrast, and to give parabolic illustrations of the nature of the coming of the Son of man. Now it is time that the commenced picture should be completed. Accordingly, a cursory examination will show that both parts of the picture perfectly fit to each other. This latter passage presupposes the other. Let them be read in connection and they will form one complete narrative.

2. There is not the slightest reason for calling this description *a parable*. In all the preceding parables the likeness, or parabolic similarity, is expressly declared. The kingdom of heaven is *likened unto* its illustration. All the terms here are literal. Surely the verses 29–31 describe literal things by their literal names. And in this passage the literal Son of man, (not a parabolic husbandman or master of servants,) in his literal person, at his literal coming to the literal judgment, so often alluded to in Scripture, is described. The folly of calling it "a parable of the sheep and goats," (of which even Olshausen is guilty,) is exposed in our comment on verse 32.

3. A certain class of expositors as strenuously maintain that this passage is an allegory symbolizing the destruction of Jerusalem. They do this for the purpose of maintaining the tenets of universal salvation, by removing from the Bible the doctrine of a future judgment and a future retribution. In this they have had, we regret to say, but too much aid from the expositions of orthodox commentators of the present day. It is unnecessary for us to say how inadmissible such a perversion of the passage is, for it appears from our whole mode of explaining this discourse. We view the whole discourse as a *distinguishing* and not a *blending* of the two events, (the *destruction* and the *advent*,) which the disciples specified in their two questions.

31. *Son of man*—In all places in which the judgment scene is alluded to, it is not the Father but the Son who is the visible judge. Hence in Rev. xx, 12, *God* must be understood to designate the God incarnate, yet glorified. It is therefore strictly speaking a proof-text of the divinity of the Son of man. Our Lord receives, or rather assumes this title not as a term solely of humiliation; but for the purpose of identifying himself as the *Son of man*, described in the glorious prophetic visions of Daniel. *All the holy angels*—That belong to the sphere of our mundane system. *Throne of his glory*—Of his final eternal kingdom. He exercises, like the judges of the Old Testament, both the judicial and regal authorities. Hence, in verse 34, he is styled king, although the action is, on the face of it, *judicial*.

32. *All nations*—Of all ages and all continents. Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome, Russia, England, and America shall, with all their populations, come up before God. All the lesser tribes and all the unorganized wanderers shall appear; for "every eye shall see him." Rev. i, 7.

That it is a judicial arraignment of individuals, and not of organic nations, is plain; because the merits and demerits upon which they are judged are purely individual, and not national, (verses 35–40, 42–45.) So in xxviii, 19, the apostles are commanded to go teach *all nations*, baptizing them, etc. That is, the entire nation is to be

shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, [x] inherit the kingdom [y] prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 [z] For I was ahungered, and ye gave me meat: I was

x Romans 8. 17; 1 Peter 1. 4, 9; 3. 9; Revelation 21. 7.—y Chapter 20. 23; Mark 10. 40; 1 Corinthians 2. 9; Hebrews 11. 16.—z Isaiah 58. 7; Ezekiel 18. 7; James 1. 27.

baptized by the baptism of every individual in it. Mark expresses it: "Preach the gospel to *every creature*." So "we must *all* appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body." 2 Cor. v, 10. He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the *world*.

Separate them—The separation is even *previous* to the judgment. This strikingly and, as we may say, undesignedly coincides with the view everywhere clearly expressed or implied, that the resurrection, though one in general time, is yet twofold. It is of the just and of the unjust, (Acts xxiv, 15;) it is unto life and unto damnation, (John v, 29;) it is unto everlasting life and unto shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. xii, 2. The saints strive for a *better* resurrection, a *glorious* resurrection; and Paul strove to attain to an extra resurrection, *ἐξανάστασις*. Phil. iii, 11. Every man shall be in his own order. 1 Cor. xv. 23. And Christ here so arrays them right and left, that their position decides their destiny before their sentences pronounce it. *As a shepherd*—Here is a slight simile running through some three lines, from which interpreters of a certain class have taken license to misname this whole description of sixteen full verses, "The parable of the sheep and the goats." The allusion to the shepherd is very transient, being a slight *simile*, and illustrates but a single point, namely, the *separation* before the judgment.

In this allusion, as in other Scripture allusions of the same kind, no doubt some reference is made to the character of the two animals. The *goat* is especially a repulsive animal, and so a fit image for wicked men; and in Hebrew there is a single word which seems to designate the *goat* and a *demon*. And similarly, in all ages perhaps, the right hand has had the preference, and the right hand seat has been the place of honour.

34. *Kingdom prepared for you*—By God's eternal purpose an immovable kingdom of glory has been prepared, and predestinated for all who should by faith in Christ and obedience to him become its heirs. The plan of redemption in Christ has been adopted with full view to this, and all who accept its terms will *inherit* its results. If this verse proves the eternal predestination of individuals to life, then verse 41 proves that the wicked were by predestination excluded from everlasting fire, because that was prepared for devils only; and yet, contrary to predestination, they are sent there!

35. *For*—A reason why they, and not others, do inherit this kingdom. Works of mercy and of love are the testimonies in their favour, that the faith and the spirit of Christ have dwelt in their hearts. All they have done has been done in his name and for him.

Because deeds only are named as grounds of reward, some reasoners have argued that the doctrine of justification by faith is here ignored; and others have even inferred thence that not the judgment day, but the destruction of Jerusalem is the subject. But,

1. The same argument would prove that the destruction of Jerusalem is not the subject; for numerous passages prove that Jerusalem was destroyed for want of faith in Christ, and her rejection of him as Messiah. Matt. xxiii. 37; Rom. ix, 32; xi, 20.

2. That no complete enumeration of

hirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 [b]Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: [c]I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord [d]when saw we thee ahungered, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?*

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, [e]Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, [f]Depart from me, ye cursed, [g]into everlasting fire, prepared for [h]the devil and his angels:

42 For I was ahungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye

a Hebrews 13. 2; 3 John 5.—*b* James 2. 15, 16.—*c* 2 Timothy 1. 16.—*d* 1 Chronicles 29. 14; Proverbs 15. 33; Isaiah 64. 6.

e Prov. 14. 31; 19. 17; chap. 10. 42; Mark 9. 41; Heb. 6. 10.—*f* Psa. 6. 8; chap. 7. 23; Luke 13. 27 *g* Chap. 13. 40, 42.—*h* 2 Pet. 2. 4; Jude 6.

the grounds of reward is intended is plain from this: only a few deeds of physical benevolence are named, and those performed solely to Christ and to "these my brethren." And this, indeed, gives the true key, and shows that faith underlies the grounds of approval. For,

3. *These my brethren* are the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom he is now delivering these discourses, and to whom he had said, "He that receiveth you receiveth me," (x, 40,) which is precisely parallel with the closing clauses of verses 40 and 45 here. The same phrase is by inference applicable to all the messengers of Christ in all ages. Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you he shall not lose his reward. And these are specific acts of faith. (See notes on x, 40–42.) The receiving the apostles was the receiving their message and their Gospel; and that, by faith, producing these works in them.

4. The reason thence appears why our Lord's statement of the ground of condemnation and approval in this passage are so incomplete. He takes that special view which suits the case of his apostles present. It was saying to these—the preachers of his Gospel in all the world—Whosoever, of mankind, from faith in my name, receives and gives you aid in the hunger, thirst, imprisonment, and exile you are called upon to suffer, will find in the day of judgment that I am his rewarder.

37. *Then shall the righteous answer*—The great principle of the inadequacy of all creature merit to so high a reward is here put into the mouths of the saints, where it most beautifully belongs. It is a truth which their deep humility prompts them to express.

40. *Ye have done it unto me*—By a turn of surpassing beauty the Lord confers an infinite value upon the least of their good or approvable acts. It was done to him. Eternal glory is the thanks he returns for personal favours. He identifies himself with the humblest object of charity, and assumes that all mercy done is done to him. He holds himself remunerator for all the good done.

41. *Prepared for the devil and his angels*—Sad mistake of these men! A glorious kingdom was prepared and predestinated for them (see our com-

clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee ahungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, [i] Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

46 And [k] these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

i Prov. 14. 31; 17. 5; Zech. 2. 8; Acts 9. 5.

k Dan. 12. 2; John 5. 29; Rom. 2, 7. &c.

ment on verse 34) from the foundation of the world; but lo! they have missed that predestinated lot, and fallen into an everlasting fire not intended for them, but *prepared for the devil and his angels!* As if God had provided no hell for men! He had secured a Redeemer mighty enough, and a heaven capacious enough for all, and had made no other arrangements. So God's plans of mercy are not accomplished, and his predestinations are not fulfilled. But as they had made themselves utterly unfit for heaven, he stows them away forever in the devil's lake of fire.

44. *They also answer him*—Such is the answer that wicked men's hearts are now prepared to give him. Jesus puts it into their mouths here to show of how little worth it is in the trying time. What wicked man now believes he is deserving everlasting fire? What great hurt has he done? How cruel it is, and impossible to believe, that the everlasting company of the devil and his angels is a fit destiny for him? Christ shows in the answer what is his view of the solemn matter.

45. *Ye did it not to me*—He here imputes an infinite demerit to their character and conduct. All their sins of omission and commission were against the very person of him—of him, the incarnation of the infinite mercy of God. By the infinite dignity of his person does he measure the infinite demerit of their sin. Hence eternity alone can measure the length of their penalty.

We have already shown clearly to our readers, we trust, that the phrase "those my brethren" refers to the apostles and messengers of the Gospel of Christ. The rejection, by these wicked ones, of these was a rejection of the Gospel and a rejection of all faith in Christ. No positive crimes, no murders, treasons, sacrileges are in this colloquy imputed to them. Their primal and all-comprehensive sin is the rejection of Christ through the ministration of his Gospel. From this cause, whatever sins they have committed stand all unforgiven. They stand without a cover in all their life's guilt, in complete exposure to the full unrestrained measure of justice without mercy. There is no need then for our Saviour to call over their catalogue of sins.

46. *And these shall go away*—Millenarians, who hold that the righteous are raised from the dead at a first resurrection one thousand years before the resurrection of the wicked at a second resurrection, are unable to explain this entire scene of judgment. Here at our Lord's next advent, at an unknown distance, stand the righteous and the wicked at once before his bar, listen in common to each other's trial and sentence before either pass to their final doom. The ordinary subterfuge is to say that this judgment day is a thousand years long. For this there is no support in the passage Besides, by their view the righteous ought to be acquitted and glorified for a millennial kingdom before the wicked are tried, or even raised from the dead. Whereas by this whole description the wicked are raised, adjudged, and condemned before the righteous enter at all upon their reward.

Everlasting punishment...life eternal—The words *everlasting* and *eternal* are

here in the original precisely the same word, and should have been so translated. Hence the duration of the penalty of the wicked is defined by the same measurement as the duration of the reward of the righteous. One is just as long as the other. The pillars of heaven are no firmer than the foundations of hell. The celestial nature of saint and angels is no more immutable than the infernal nature of devils and sinners. And since the word used is the most expressive of perpetuity that the Greek affords, so we have the strongest assurance here that language can afford. And since the term is used as a measurement of divine duration, we may well infer that the foundations both of the divine rewards and the divine penalties are as perpetual as the foundation of the divine government. Clouds and darkness are indeed round about him; righteousness and justice are the basis of his throne.

The word *αἰών* (we may suggest to scholars) is not derived, as Dr. Clarke, (quoting Aristotle) asserts, from *ἀεί*, *always*, and *ὤν*, *existing;* for *ων* is but the noun termination added to *ἀεί*. This noun termination is equivalent to the Latin termination *um;* so that the Latin *ævum* is (with a digamma inserted) the same word as *ἀιών*. The Latin word *ævum* is the same as our word *ever*, so that the Greek *εἰς αιωνα* is precisely *forever*. By adding the adjective termination *ernus* to *aei* we have (inserting a strengthening *t*) *æternus*, eternal. So that *αἰων*, *ever*, and *eternal*, are etymological equivalents.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

Time of the Second Advent.

On this chapter we would remark: It has been objected by skeptics that the New Testament in many places predicts that the day of judgment would take place in the apostolic day. Such passages are James v, 7: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord." 1 Peter iv, 7: "The end of all things is at hand." Philippians iv, 5: 'The Lord is at hand." Hebrews x, 37: "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

From this even some Christian commentators have inferred actual mistake by the apostles. But what is more remarkable is, that the same mistake, if any, occurs in the language of *our Lord himself*, especially in this discourse; so that if error was committed it must be as truly imputed to him as to his apostles. This difficulty may be obviated by the following considerations:

1. Both our Lord and the apostles abundantly affirm, that with regard to the particular time of the judgment day there is a complete uncertainty. "It is not for you to know the times and seasons," says our Saviour to his apostles in reference to this very point, "which the Father has put in his own power." Acts i, 7. And St. Paul says in very similar words, (1 Thess. v, 1, 2:) "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you, for yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." That the Thessalonians knew this "perfectly," indicates that this uncertainty was a matter notorious among all Christians at that day, But the most striking passage of many on this subject is the words of our Lord, Mark xiii, 32: "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven." Now ignorance or even mistake on a subject regarding which a man explicitly professes to be uninspired or uninformed, cannot affect his authority regarding facts within the limits of his inspiration.

2. There are many indications occurring in the New Testament that that day was after all to be considered as indefinitely distant. The following texts indicate an expectation of death before the Second Coming of Christ: 1 Cor. vi, 14; 2 Cor. iv, 14; v, 1; Phil. i, 21, etc.; iii, 10, 11. "My lord *delayeth* his coming," is the language of the servant in the parable. Matt xxiv, 48. "While the bridegroom *tarried*." Matt xxv, 5. "The kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling in a *far country*." Matt. xxv. 14. And in John xxi, 22, 23, the language of our Lord in regard to the

CHAPTER XXVI.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 [a] Ye know that after two

a Mark 14. 1; Luke 22. 1; John 13. 1.

beloved disciple, "I will that he tarry till I come," produced the impression among the apostles that *that disciple should not die.* But John adds that his Lord did not say that; and then he repeats the very words which the Lord did utter, in a manner indicating that he himself did not pretend to know their precise meaning. St. Paul, in 2 Thess. ii, 1–10, intimates that that day shall not come until events of indefinite magnitude should be completed. The Apocalypse, if we rightly interpret it, is a prophecy of a long series of events before the judgment day.

3. But the key to the whole mystery is furnished in 2 Peter iii, 8, where, in regard to this very point, Peter reminds us that "one day with the Lord is as a thousand years." Scoffers in the last days, he tells us, would raise this very objection: "Where is the promise of his coming?" Peter replies by informing us that the distance of the event is to be measured by the arithmetic of God. One day is as a thousand years; and language that would seem to intimate a *few days* may really embrace *a few thousands or myriads* of years.

In conclusion: If it be true that both Christ and his apostles have warned us that the time of the second advent was to them unrevealed and unknown; if they use in abundance terms indicating an indefinite distance: if they themselves furnish the solution of all their expressions intimating its near proximity, all objection to their infallibility in regard to other subjects upon which they speak with professed inspiration, are nugatory and captious.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Tuesday of Passion Week.

§ 120. REMAINING TRANSACTIONS OF TUESDAY PRECEDING THE CRUCIFIXION, 1-14.

1. *Came to pass*—Our Lord's public ministry has terminated, and the evangelist proceeds to the closing events—the crucifixion and ascension.

It is at the great feast of the passover that the last act commences. In this chapter Matthew first states our Lord's announcement of that fatal passover, 1–2; next the secret conspiracy of the Jews, 3–4; then he describes a certain supper at Bethany, at which he was perfumed with the precious ointment, 6–16; and then narrates the preparing of their paschal supper and its ominous events, 17–29. From the supper he traces the Saviour over Mount Olivet, 30–35; and thence to Gethsemane, where he is arrested, 35–56. His appearance before Caiaphas and denial by Peter are the remaining scenes of that sad night which Matthew details, 57–75.

1. *When Jesus had finished all these sayings*—All the sayings of the preceding chapter. From the scenes of glory and judgment which he had described in that discourse, he now turns, in sad contrast, to the scenes of his humiliation. *All these sayings*, therefore, concluded all the public ministry of the Saviour. His enemies could have no power over him until he had delivered his whole message. So it has been said that "a true minister is immortal until his work is done." His whole work as a prophet at last being performed, his work as a priest in the sacrifice of himself now commences.

He said unto his disciples—He has finished now with the world, and he turns to the inner circle of his chosen ones.

2. *Ye know*—Our Lord begins with telling them what they *knew;* but he finished by telling them what they do *not* know until he tells them. The true teacher leads his pupils from the known to the unknown. The disciples knew that the passover was coming; Jesus knew that the crucifixion was coming. Though his mission as proph

days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

b Psalm 2. 2; John 11. 47; Acts 4. 25, &c.

3 [b]Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people,

et was discharged, his foreknowledge as a prophet was not diminished. He is prophet, that is, master, by clear, calm foresight, of the whole train of transactions.

After two days—This was uttered probably at sunset on Tuesday; just twice twenty-four hours before the time of his paschal supper with his disciples, which took place on the Thursday evening preceding the Friday of the crucifixion.

Passover—This was the great feast of the Jews in commemoration of their departure from Egypt, when the destroying angel who cut off the first-born of the Egyptians was made to *pass over* the residences of the Jews harmless. A victim was upon that occasion slain by divine command, and his blood stricken on the two door-posts and upon the *lintel*, or top cross-piece, as a sign that the house was the abode of an Israelite. See Exod. xii, 1–30. In annual commemoration of this the following passover rites were appointed: On the tenth day of the month Nisan, (corresponding nearly to our April,) a male lamb without blemish, of either sheep or goats, was selected. It was to be kept until the fourteenth day of Nisan, when it was to be slain by the priest between the two evenings of three and six o'clock, and the blood was to be poured at the foot of the great altar. At evening each family, including not less than ten persons, was to eat the lamb. They were originally commanded to do this with all the tokens of rapid departure. Their feet were to be shod, their loins girt, their staff in hand, and they were to eat not reclining, but standing, and their bread was to be unleavened, and the whole was to be done "with haste." "Bitter herbs" were to be eaten, as a symbol of their bitter sufferings in Egypt. Seven days were set apart (Exodus xii, 15) as *a feast of unleavened bread.* The first and last were to be days of holy convocation. The first day commenced with the eve on which the paschal lamb was eaten. In the Passion Week it was Friday. See note on verse 5.

We here remark that the victim was a true vicarious sacrifice. Egypt for his sins was punished by the selection of a human representative, namely, his first-born. Israel too was a sinner; but he suffered by substitution of the "lamb without spot." The paschal lamb was slain, and was to be, not boiled like other sacrifices, but *roasted*, to indicate by fire the terrible agonies of the atoning victim; and being roasted upon the cross-spit, he was literally *crucified.* The blood of the first victim sprinkled upon Israel's lintel is a most remarkable symbol of that blood sprinkled upon our souls, whereby God knows us for his own and spares us when he makes inquisition for blood.

The passover lamb is indeed a wondrous type of "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;" by whose sprinkled blood we are saved from death and redeemed from spiritual bondage. It was on the passover night that our Lord instituted the sacrament as a bloodless continuation of the same commemoration, divested of its special Jewish significance. And our Lord himself was slain at this very feast, which was appointed by Moses to predict beforehand his death. On this occasion the Jews slew, not only the typical victim, but the *real victim* typified by their feasts and sacrifices.

3. *Then assembled*—The evangelist suddenly changes the scene. While Jesus is innocently, with his disciples, predicting his own death, a dark band of conspirators are assembling to make his prediction true.

Assembled . . . chief priests . . . scribes . . . elders—The three classes of men here mentioned made up the Sanhedrim or great council of *seventy*, the supreme legislature, especially in ecclesiastical matters of the Jewish nation. The

unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

chief priests were, (in addition to the high priest,) the ex-high priests, the heads of the priestly courses, and eminent men of the priestly order. The *elders* were laymen of age, wisdom, and ability. The *scribes* were the learned class, whether of Levitical descent or otherwise. How the members of the Sanhedrim were elected is not certain. Of this body the high priest was the usual summoner and president. At his right hand sat the vice-president; at his left the hakim, or counsellor, who gave legal opinions. From these the members sat, extending in a semicircle, around the council-room. From the heat of the climate, this council often held its sessions very early in the morning, as in the case of our Saviour's arraignment. The Sanhedrim's session-room was at the hall Gazith, at the southeast corner of the Court of Israel. See Plan of Temple.

High priest—The high priest was at the head of the Jewish sacerdotal system, the sacred representative of the nation. Aaron, brother of Moses, was first consecrated high priest, and the office remained in his family for some fifteen hundred years. To him belonged the most solemn of the sacred rites, and the decision of difficulties in religious matters. The high priest was often judge in general matters and supreme magistrate of the nation. When invested with the ephod and the urim and thummim, he became the medium of prophetic responses.

The exterior vestments of the high priest were his tunic or gown, richly embroidered, extending to his feet. Next the robe of the ephod, which was a garment put on by an opening at the top, and hung down part of the way to the feet, having suspended on its lower border a row of alternate bells and pomegranates. Over this the ephod, consisting of two richly adorned oblong pieces of cloth, hanging so as to cover the breast and the back, and fastened at the top by shoulder-pieces, gemmed with an onyx; around these was a broad girdle of fine linen, purple, blue, and scarlet. On his head was a turban or mitre, with an inscription on the forehead: "Holiness to the Lord." The breastplate rested upon the ephod, and was studded with four rows of precious stones, three in a row, bearing the names of the twelve tribes. To these were originally added the urim and thummim, in regard to the form of which scholars differ, while they agree that it was a divine oracle by which God made revelation through the high priest.

Until the time of Herod this dignity descended with due regularity in the Aaronic line; but the Herodian and Roman rulers made changes at will, and appointed a new high priest so frequently that the office became almost annual, and a number of ex-high priests were living. These formed a part of the *chief priests* mentioned in this verse.

Caiaphas—Joseph Caiaphas succeeded Simon son of Canith as high priest about the year 27, in the reign of the emperor Tiberius. His wife was daughter of Annas, who had formerly been high priest, and was still highly revered by the Jews, and before whom, according

4 And [c]consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill *him*.

5 But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.

[c] Psalm 2. 2.—[d] Mark 14. 3; John 11. 1, 2; 12. 3.

to John, Jesus was first brought. Caiaphas was deposed in the year 38, after which nothing is known of his history.

Palace of the high priest—The word αὐλή, here rendered *palace*, signifies more properly the *court*, or *square yard*, enclosed in the centre of the building, and under the open sky. The meaning was, however, extended sometimes so as to include, or at any rate imply, the entire building or mass of buildings.

5. *Not on the feast day*—They thus decided that it should not be on the feast day, that is, on Friday; but God overruled them, and it took place on that very day. It was in fact customary with the Roman rulers to select the passover as the best occasion for the execution of criminals, when the large multitude being present, the sight was calculated to impress the public mind. But for Jesus there were so many friends likely to be present from Galilee and from the country, that the conspirators feared an attempt at rescue. So severe, they knew, was the rule of Pilate, that at any appearance of a fray the Roman guard in the fortress of Antonia would be let loose upon both parties alike, even though their blood, like that of certain Galileans, should be mingled with their sacrifices. But the offer of Judas, of an apprehension without a fray, both relieved and changed their minds. Jesus was crucified during the passover week; the type of the passover was more clearly carried out; and the fact of his crucifixion was made more public through the Jewish nation.

Tuesday Night.

ANOINTING OF JESUS, AND INDIGNATION OF JUDAS AND THE DISCIPLES, 6–16

6. *Simon the leper*—Who had been cured by the Saviour. He lived at

6 ¶ [d]Now when Jesus was in [e]Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of [f]very precious ointment, and

[e] Chap. 21. 17.—[f] Exod. 30. 23, 33; Psa. 133. 2; Isa. 57. 9.

Bethany, and was neighbour, perhaps relative, of the family of Lazarus and Mary. John informs us that at this feast Lazarus was present. So our Lord, probably, sat between the man he had cured of the most terrible of diseases, and the man whom he had raised from the dead. And as Lazarus was present, (John xii, 1–9,) so his sister Martha served, and Mary was the woman who anointed the Saviour. All this indicates that the friends of Jesus combined to give him a feast at Simon's house. John and Matthew no doubt relate the same transaction. The manner in which both are blended into one by Mark places this beyond all question.

7. *Came...a woman*—John informs us that she was Mary the sister of Lazarus. The other evangelists are less explicit, as they say but little about the family of Lazarus. It seems as if Mary was not at the feast, but entered unexpectedly.

Alabaster box—Alabaster is a sort of white marble of much beauty and polish. It was a costly article, and was supposed to possess a special virtue for preserving ointment. Of this, ointment-boxes were first made. Afterward they retained the same name, even when the material was different, as glass or metal. The *box* was rather a vial with a long neck, and hence Mark says she poured the ointment, or rather *oil*, by *breaking*, namely, the neck of the vial; John says she anointed, additionally, his feet. This she could easily do, for it must be remembered that our Saviour did not sit in a modern chair, but reclined on a couch at meat.

Ointment—This was the nardine unguent, made from the spikenard; and was of costly value, being customarily

poured it on his head, as he sat *at meat.*

8 [g]But when his disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste?

9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, [h]Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11 [i]For ye have the poor always with you; but [j]me ye have not always.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall

g John 12. 5.—*h* Job 13. 7.
i Deut. 15. 11; John 12. 8.

j See chap. 18. 20; 28. 20; John 13. 33; 14. 19; 16. 5, 28; 17. 11.

used for a perfuming application to give softness and agreeable odour to the skin.

8. *When his disciples*—This odour of the perfume, though it filled the room with fragrance, is not grateful to every taste. The disciples, as we learn from John, *have indignation.* Judas seems to have commenced it, and we know how, when a censure is commenced, it may be taken up by all.

9. *Given to the poor*—John informs us that the utterer of this benevolent *talk* was Judas; not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a covetous thief at heart, being carrier of the money-bag. Mary meant it for a token of love to him, the Redeemer of the world. There are thousands who think that the money given for the Gospel had better be bestowed in mere temporal supplies; forgetting that it is much better to bestow upon men those *principles* which will make them wise, good, and industrious, than to give them supplies which will leave them as wicked and thriftless as ever. Could the faith that Mary showed in the Redeemer inspire all the world, the poor would be easily taken care of.

Sold for much—Judas ciphered it up. It would come to just 300 denarii.

10. *Why trouble ye the woman?*—Mary was doubtless startled by this murmur among the Lord's *own disciples.* She stands in silence, attempting no defence But the voice of the Saviour rebukes the rebukers, and not only defends but utters a eulogy upon the deed.

11. *The poor always with you*—The Saviour could be with them but a moment. Their charity will have in this world a plenty of objects for its exercise.

12. *Did it for my burial*—It is supposed by some that Mary had either been informed by our Lord of his approaching death, or even that she had some prophetic presentiment of it. It may be remarked that, for the sake of propriety, our Lord was regularly accompanied by twelve male disciples; but the Gospels take care to assure us that those who believed and loved him were not all *men;* but that *woman* in her place was not less true to his divine claims than man. Of this fact Mary is the most striking instance; and the meek, silent, and sudden manner in which she comes from her retirement, perhaps from her place of prayer, where the sad future of our Lord may have been intimated to her, into this feast, and performs this act of sorrowful affection, is a special exemplification. It may well be thought possible that our Lord communicated to her a clearer knowledge of his approaching death than to his disciples. Or it may be that to her, as to a divine love, was imparted the spiritual presentiment of the truth. And yet, finally, it is very possible that she acted from the simple impulse of love; and that our Lord himself giving it a higher meaning, elevated the act into a prediction of his approaching burial. Just so the words of Caiaphas (John xi, 49–53) had an unconscious prophetic import.

13. *This gospel shall be preached*—That is, the Gospel of the dying Saviour

be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

14 ¶ [k]Then one of the twelve, called [l]Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 And said *unto them*, [m]What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

17 ¶ [n]Now the first *day* of

k Mark 14. 10; 22. 3; John 13. 2, 30.
l Chapter 10. 4.

m Zech. 11. 12; chap. 27. 3.—*n* Exod. 12. 6, 18; Mark 14. 12; Luke 22. 7.

which he subsequently (Mark xvi, 15) commanded them to preach in all the world, and to every creature. The words here show that our Lord expected his Gospel to be diffused throughout the world. The fact that the mention of this deed of Mary was to be a memorial, shows that our Lord did not expect, as some say, that the world would soon terminate, but that the Gospel should be preached through future ages and to distant generations. So clearly was our Lord master of the great future that, while great deeds have been done and yet forgotten in all the world, this simple act of tender premonition is to be told through the world and through the lapse of time, and will be celebrated while the world lasts. In that Gospel history many an unhappy character and odious name would be transmitted to posterity; but this deed of Mary should be a precious memorial; and the very name of MARY should be sweet in the ears of mankind.

14. *One of the twelve*—A very apostle, *one of the twelve* stars in the Christian firmament, thus falls, to be a betrayer and seller of the Son of man. Judas was doubtless stung by the present conversation. The chief blame of our Lord's rebuke lay on *him*.

Wednesday of Passion Week.

15. *What will ye give*—This is a true bargainer's question. He is ready to betray his Master if he can get the *pay* for it. He has a man, a divine man, to sell, and he hucksters for his price. Luke says that "Satan had now entered into him." He is driven by the fire of a hasty resentment, and led by the attractions of gain to seek a bribe for treason. He makes the advance, and tempts the men who are wicked enough without any special seducing. Thus do men enact the part of Satan towards each other.

They covenanted—Luke says "they were glad." They could now apprehend Jesus in a private way, and without the "uproar" mentioned in verse fifth.

Thirty pieces of silver—The ordinary price of a slave, being about fifteen dollars. Thus was verified the allusion of Zech. xi, 12: "So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver." The sum appears trifling for the treason, if we estimate it by the immense consequences. But, after all, the whole service Judas did was to inform the foes of Jesus where he might be found and taken without tumult, and guide them to the place.

16. *Sought opportunity to betray him*—Luke informs us that the opportunity he sought was the absence of the multitude. The people were so strongly on the side of Jesus that the authorities dare not openly apprehend him. Their method was to take him secretly, charge him with some crime, and thus gain the multitude against him.

Thursday of Passion Week.

§ 121.—TWO DISCIPLES SENT TO PREPARE THE PASSOVER, 17–19.

17. *Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread*—This was Thursday, the day before the crucifixion day, the day upon whose evening our Saviour ate the paschal lamb. We nave remarked before that, accurately speaking, the *passover* and *the feast of un-*

the *feast of* unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, °My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.

19 And the disciples did as

o Luke 22. 53; John 7. 6, 30; 8. 20; 12. 23; 13. 1; 17. 1.

leavened bread were distinct; the latter being during the seven days after the passover, and commencing the next day after the passover supper. But inasmuch as the leavened bread was, by way of preparation, banished from their houses on this day, before the passover supper, it was properly called the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, as it is called here. The feast of unleavened bread was thus enjoined by Moses, Exodus xii, 18: "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall eat unleavened bread until the one and twentieth day of the month at even."

18. *Go into the city*—The city of Jerusalem, for a paschal lamb could be eaten at no other place. The Jews of the present day do not eat the paschal lamb at their annual passover. They only celebrate the feast of unleavened bread, which, as we have before said, followed the passover.

To such a man—This was a very indefinite direction; and perhaps Matthew only gives the substance of what Mark gives more explicitly. As they entered the city they would find a water carrier, whom they should follow, and he would guide them to the householder, who would furnish them a room. *Such a man*—A man I will not name. The man will occur by human accident; but free will and human accident all operate under the clear-seeing eye of God's foreknowledge. God clearly sees what man will freely do. As God sees how man will freely do, so he does most wisely adjust his plans. So God carries out his vast projects by taking and interweaving man's free acts into his complex plans.

This direction very much resembles the sending the disciples to find in a miraculous manner the beast on which he should ride into Jerusalem, as well as the miracle of finding the coin in the fish's mouth. For even if we suppose, with some commentators, that our Lord had intimated beforehand to some wealthy friend, as Joseph or Nicodemus, that he would take the last passover upon earth at his house, still, *finding the pitcher-bearer* was a supernatural contingency. The reason of such proceedings on the part of our Lord, which some commentators are so puzzled to find, is clearly to manifest to all around that *he foresees all the events and sufferings before him.* That is, he marches forward in a foreseen path of duty, and his sufferings are undergone in a perfectly voluntary manner. John x, 18.

The Master saith—The word *master* is correlative to the word *disciple;* and thus it is clearly implied that the householder is a *follower* of Jesus. Indeed, when we recollect that the rulers were afraid of the multitudes, as being adherents of Jesus, we may reasonably infer that the number of those who would call him "*Master*" was not few. *My time is at hand*—My time of suffering, previous to which I have promised to eat the paschal lamb at your house. And this language clearly implies that the man was our Lord's *disciple,* that he clearly understood what was meant by the phrase "my time," and that he was fully ready to appreciate the honour of furnishing the room for our Lord's use. During passover week the houses of Jerusalem were hospitably open to the comers from the different parts of Palestine to celebrate the passover.

19. *Did as Jesus had appointed them*—It was a blind sort of an errand upon which they were to go, and it was undertaken in full faith that it should turn

Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

20 pNow when the even was

p Mark 14. 17-21; Luke 22. 14; John 13. 21.

come, he sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he

out right. So those men were trained to go on a still greater errand, even the proclaiming the everlasting Gospel to the guilty world.

Made ready the passover—They were not only to secure the *room*, but procure the *lamb*, which had been first inspected by the priests, have it killed and the blood sprinkled at the foot of the altar, and take it to the house. They were to obtain the *bread* and *wine* and the bitter herbs. The two disciples were Peter and John; and no doubt it was with wondering sadness that they performed the faithful office.

§ 122, 124.—Supper and Intimation of his Betrayal, 20–25.

20. *Now when the even was come*—The passover evening. Between three and six o'clock the paschal lamb was slain. Not less than ten, nor more than twenty persons sat down to the same supper. If our Lord followed in the main the usual custom of the Jews, as described by Maimonides, the following things were done. Our Lord, being master of the family, as they reclined on their meal-couches, took a cup of wine in his right hand, and uttered the prayer of consecration, saying, "Blessed be thy name, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast created the fruit of the vine." He then drank the first cup and was followed by all the others.

Originally the whole service was performed *standing;* but when the Jews were settled in Canaan they adopted the reclining posture, to symbolize the repose which God had given them

A service was then brought in, consisting of bitter herbs, unleavened bread, and a sort of fruit-cake made of raisins, figs, dates, etc., pressed together, to represent the clay with which Israel made brick in Egypt, which was called the *charoseth;* and besides this was the paschal lamb. The master, and then the rest, first ate a bitter herb, and gave thanks for the fruit of the earth. Then a disciple asks, as being one of the family, according to Exodus xii, 26, "What mean ye by this?" The Lord answers by explaining the historical import of the paschal commemoration. Psalms 113 and 114 were then sung. And then the second cup of wine was drunk.

Then occurs that part which our Lord transferred to the new dispensation. Usually the Hebrew officiating householder took cakes and brake them with benediction, and gave to each one a piece, saying, "This is" (that is, *this represents*) "the bread of affliction which our fathers did eat in the land of Egypt." This our Lord changed to "*This is my body*," that is, *represents* my body. Then was the paschal flesh eaten, a full meal being taken. After this the third cup, which our Lord applied to its higher use in the new dispensation. The old mode was for the master to take the cup, pronounce a blessing, and drink; his example being followed by the others. This is "the cup of blessing" which the apostle mentions, and identifies with the sacramental cup, in 1 Cor. x, 16. Then by custom followed the fourth cup, (which our Lord omitted,) followed by the chant of the Great Hallel. See note on ver. 30

21. *As they did eat*—Introductory to and during this supper, some things occur not mentioned by Matthew, but furnished by the other evangelists. Our Lord at the commencement expressed the solemn desire with which he had anticipated that feast. Luke xxii, 14, 15. Before the supper had fully begun, (Luke xxii, 14–18,) a strife for pre-eminence took place among the disciples, which drew forth from our Lord a lesson on humility, which he then illustrated by washing his disciples' feet. John xiii, 1–20. This he probably did as they reclined upon their supper-couches. This strife, at this most unsuitable time, probably arose for the

said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

23 And he answered and said, [q] He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

24 The Son of man goeth [r] as it is written of him: but [s] woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had

q Psalm 41. 9; Luke 22. 21; John 13. 18. *r* Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Daniel 9. 26; Mark 9. 12; Luke 24. 25, 26, 46; Acts 17. 2, 3; 26. 22, 23; 1 Corinthians 15. 3.——*s* John 17. 12.

pre-eminence at the table, of which the Orientals were very tenacious. Then follow the references to his betrayer here given by Matthew. *Shall betray me*—In regard to the conversation by which our Lord specified Judas as the betrayer, I think the true order of things will be best ascertained by reading in sections Matt. xxvi, 21–22, then John xiii, 23–26, then Matt. xxvi, 24, 25, and last John xiii, 27–30. We thereby trace the gradual climax by which our Lord first makes a general charge, then narrows it to a group, then so reveals it to one as that it would be soon known to all, and then identifies the traitor to himself. In the present verse, as the first of the above steps of exposure, the charge is general, and any one of the disciples may claim it to himself.

22. *Lord, is it I?*—It is an interesting point that each one thought at the moment, not of his neighbour, but of himself. Perhaps, had they not been disturbed by the announcement, and a sorrow at the fact that the predicted death of their Lord was approaching in the terrible form of treachery, they might have guessed the man. To their credit they did not. Judas had already made the secret bargain, and knew by consciousness of guilt that *he* was the man; while the other apostles are struck with consternation to hear that a traitor is among them.

23. *Dippeth his hand with me in the dish*—By this it is intimated that it was *one who reclined near him*, and even *supplied himself from the same dish.* This forms the second advance of exposure. At the same time in this expression our Lord seems to have aggravated the crime of the traitor by suggesting the language of the Psalmist: "He that did eat my bread hath lifted up his heel against me." Psalm xli, 9. But our Lord did not leave the traitor without a third and still more special detection. John tells us (xiii, 23–26) that at Peter's request he himself, as reclining nearest his Lord's bosom, inquired of Jesus in an under tone, "Lord, who is it?" Our Lord replied, doubtless in the same sub-tone, "He it is to whom I shall give a sop." He then gave the sop to Judas, by which the two disciples knew the man for certainty. Judas by some tokens sees that he is individualized, and at last himself puts the question, *Is it I?* (Matt. xxvi, 25,) and receives an affirmative answer, immediately, by which the whole eleven learn the man. Judas then, full rightly, thinks it time to vacate his place.

24. *The Son of man goeth as it is written of him*—He marches with unfaltering step in the way to the scene of death, as marked out by the divine prophecies. Yet that does not exculpate the authors of his death.

Woe unto that man—No apologies for Judas can stand before this terrible *woe.* It marks him out as one of the dark beings in human history, one who must ever be named when an example of utmost guilt is to be adduced. The fact that Judas's free act of treachery was foreseen of God made it none the less free, and therefore none the less guilty. As St. Chrysostom says: "Judas was not a traitor because God foresaw it; but God foresaw it because Judas would be so." Foreknowledge does not force or compel an act, or make it less free than if it were wholly unforeknown.

been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

Had not been born—And so it is impossible that he can ever be restored to Divine favour. For if after millions of years he ascends to an eternity of happiness, he is a clear gainer in the balance of existence. It will not do, as before intimated, to say that this phrase, "Good that he had never been born," is a mere *proverb*. No doubt thoughtless persons may use the same phrase lightly to indicate some inferior misery. But our Lord here is speaking too seriously to be repeating a proverbial hyperbole. He expresses and knows the full measure of Judas's woe; and he would neither aggravate it beyond its literal extent, nor lightly express it in a *cant saying*.

After this verse we must bring in the passage in John, who tells us that he privately asked the Lord which the traitor was, and that our Lord gave him a sign by which he knew the man.

25. *Master, is it I?*—After Jesus gave Judas the sop, which was the sign of guilt, then Judas, as out of due season, and quite mechanically, repeats the question. *Thou hast said*—This is an affirmative answer, and identifies the traitor to himself. The gradual exposure is brought to the final point. *He is the man.* And John tells us that the traitor forthwith arose and went out into the congenial darkness of surrounding night.

Ingenious men have in modern times exerted their skill in framing apologies for Judas, and discovering innocent motives in his case. He might, forsooth, have expected that our Lord would deliver himself by miracle. He might have purposed to compel our Lord to declare himself openly as king of the Jews, and set up his government. Very plainly this is not the view of the Saviour or the evangelists. Reserved as the sacred writers are in declaring the character of the various men whose acts they describe, they speak very plainly of Judas. Whatever his previous character was, in process of time he was "a devil," "a thief, and carried the bag." A hypocrite in feigning care for the poor, he hastened, under the immediate impulse of resentment for a trifling offence, to join the Saviour's enemies. But impetuous passion so blended with cold calculation that he gratified revenge and avarice together. He seems not to have calculated upon our Lord's miraculous interference, or his asserting his royalty. He simply meant to obtain a price by surrendering his life to his enemies. Hence our Lord's terrible woe upon him, and the terms of detestation with which the apostles uniformly load him. His repentance was wrung by divine compulsion from him, in order to place on record the testimony of Christ's vilest enemy to the innocence of his character. It was not a repentance like that of Peter, restoring him to holiness and apostleship; but the repentance of the devils, by which, in the agony of remorse, they throw out their involuntary testimony for God and goodness. And the fact of this final attestation of the innocence of Jesus justifies the remark, that the truth of Christianity is not more sustained by the life of Paul than by the death of Judas.

§§ 126, 128.—Institution of the Lord's Supper, 26–29

We come now to words which have sounded forth through the Church through all ages since our Lord's departure, and which are to sound forth until he comes again. The nature of the Lord's Supper is best understood when we recollect that it is, under the Christian dispensation, the continuance in a modified form of the passover of the Old Testament. As baptism is the modified ordinance of circumcision, as the Lord's day is a modified continuance of the Sabbath, so is the Lord's Supper a modified continuance of the paschal supper of the Old Testament Church. We may first remark that the passover was a true sacrifice

26 ¶ [t]And as they were eating, [u]Jesus took bread, and [1]blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; [v]this is my body.

t Mark 14. 22; Luke 22. 19.
u 1 Cor. 11. 23-25.

1 Many Greek copies have, *gave thanks.*
Mark 6. 41.—v 1 Cor. 10. 16.

for the victim was a true substitute for the sinner, dying in his stead, and showing by his death that the sinner ought to die. Israel was as true a sinner as Egypt, and as truly deserving the stroke of the destroying angel; but God, as he *passed over*, accepted the blood presented by Israel's faith, (which blood was a confession, on Israel's part, that he deserved the death the victim suffered in his stead) as a substitute. And as this shed blood was typical of the shed blood of the Saviour, so the lamb itself was typical of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Hence it was, by anticipation, a representation of that same reality, which is set forth by the communion of the Lord's Supper. Both are typical of the same thing, and therefore correspondent to each other. The Lord's Supper is in a proper sense the bloodless sacrifice of the new dispensation.

And the very fact that our Lord instituted his supper on the same evening as the paschal supper, shows that it is a *continuance* in a modified form. It simply drops off the bloody elements; so that it is in fact true that our sacramental ordinance has been continued from the departure of Israel to the present time, and will be continued until the full redemption and departure of the spiritual Israel under the greater Moses to the full fruition of the heavenly Canaan.

We have then the following typical parallels:

The Redeemed.	*The Victim.*	*The Deliverance.*	*The Result.*
Israel.	The paschal lamb.	From Egypt.	Canaan.
The communicant.	The broken bread.	From spiritual bondage.	The spiritual emancipation.
The believer.	The crucified Jesus.	From hell.	Heaven.

The prophecies of the Old Testament more commonly predicted a glorious and triumphant Messiah; the sacrifices predicted the Messiah as dying and atoning.

26. *As they were eating*—When in the course of the paschal supper they arrived at the breaking of bread, as we have above described. The bread was in the form of cakes. The breaking, under the old dispensation, represented the breaking which Israel suffered in Egypt; but in the new, the breaking is transferred to the victim, who assumes our sins and sufferings in his own body. The breaking was the customary mode of separating bread into parts; yet it was none the less a significant part of the rite. Paul clearly intimates that the *breaking* symbolized the violence by which our Lord's body was put to death. 1 Cor xi, 24. Breaking, and not cutting, seems the proper mode of severing the sacramental portions. *Blessed it*—To bless is to implore the divine blessing upon it, that is, to pray solemnly that God would graciously make it effective of its beneficent purpose. The blessing on the bread was the Redeemer's prayer that the bread might be of a blessed effect to the partaker.

This is my body—A customary mode in Scripture, as in common language, of expressing that a symbol *is* or *stands for* its original. It is perfectly natural to say that a sign is the thing it signifies. This is usually done in explaining some symbolical representations. So Joseph in explaining a dream says: "The three branches *are* three days." Gen. xl, 12. So at this very supper our Lord says: "This cup *is* the new testament." 1 Cor. xi, 25. If the phrase "This [bread] is my body," really means that the bread is our Lord's literal material body, then the phrase "This cup is the new testament" means that the material vessel (not the wine in it) was an actual "new testament." Common

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, [w] Drink ye all of it;
28 For [x] this is my blood [y] of the

[w] Mark 14. 23.—[x] Exod. 24. 8; Lev. 17. 11.—[y] Jer. 31. 31.

sense ought to show that our Lord is now explaining the import of certain symbols, and in so doing he uses the ordinaiy phrase of saying that the symbol *is* the thing symbolized.

Our readers perceive that we are here refuting the strange doctrine of the Church of Rome, which affirms that the bread is *transubstantiated*, that is, changed in substance, into the very body of our Lord. And as it implies that the bread is Christ's *present* body, it is also called the doctrine of *real presence*. This doctrine bears marks of dishonesty, for,

1. It doctrinally places the material person of God in the hands of a priest. It makes the salvation of the layman's soul dependent upon the priest's consent to give him the flesh of God. It thus places the man at the mercy of the priest. Hence the doctrine of transubstantiation is the basis of the most abject subjection of the laity to the priesthood in the Church of Rome.

2. It is a most absurd doctrine. It makes Christ to have held his own body between his own thumb and fingers. While his body was reclining, they were holding it in their hand, chewing it with their teeth, digesting it in their stomachs. Thus were they cannibals, eating human flesh! All this is founded upon a forced interpretation of language which, according to ordinary idiom, means something else.

3. The doctrine violates the very nature of the institution. From the time of the first paschal lamb downward, the purpose of the slain victim was to *represent* the body of the true victim instead of presenting the *body itself*. The slain lamb *represented* that true body until He came. The broken bread must *represent* it until he come again. What makes this plain, is the fact that at the old Jewish passover the master of the table was accustomed to say as he took the bread, "This *is* [that is, this *represents*] the bread of affliction, which our fathers did eat in the land of Egypt." But in the place of this formula our Lord substitutes, "This *is* [that is, *represents*] my body." From being the representative of Israel in suffering, it becomes now the representative of the suffering substitute of the sinner. To make it not a representative, but the thing itself, is, therefore, to violate the congruity of the typical system.

27. *Took the cup and gave thanks*—From the Greek word *εὐχαριστέω*, *eucharisteo*, to give thanks, the Lord's Supper is called the *eucharist*. For since it is taken in thankful remembrance of our Lord's great work of redemption, so it is truly a thank offering, that is a *eucharist*.

Drink ye all of it—That is, *drink all ye of it*. And Mark adds that they *all* drank of it. As our Lord here represents the future minister, so the disciples represent the future laity; and as our Lord here directs them to partake the cup, so the Church of Rome, which withholds the cup from the laity, is palpably disobedient to the Saviour's command. Surely, as it is the *blood* which redeems, the Church of God should not be denied the participation of his *blood*.

28. *This is my blood*—As the *grain* is the *body*, so the *juice* is the *blood* of the life of universal nature. And as the vine is the most beautiful pipe through which the juice of nature's life flows forth to exhilarate man, so its ruddy colour reminds us that it is as it were the very *blood* which creation gives forth from her own body to cheer and nourish man. Thereby how striking an image does it become of the true blood which is shed forth from the body of nature's incarnate God! It reminds us at once of his death and our life. Hence, when he poured the wine forth, how strong an image does he ever present to us of that streaming blood which assures us of the death of Him who died for all. Sense thus aids faith.

new testament, which is shed [z] for many for the remission of sins.

29 But [a] I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, [b] until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

30 [c] And when they had sung

z Ch. 20. 28; Rom 5. 15; Heb. 9. 22.—a Mark 14. 25; Luke 22. 18.—b Acts 10. 41.—c Mark 14. 26

Of the new testament—As the blood of the paschal lamb was of the Old Testament. The word *testament* properly signifies covenant, or agreement by God with men; in the which he prescribes a system of duties and conditions, and promises his blessings. Under Moses, he had the old covenant or testament; under Christ, the new. And so the two volumes of the Bible are called the Old Testament and the New. Note here that the blood of the Old Testament, that is, of the passover, was just as truly and really the blood of the Saviour as the blood of the New, that is, the wine of the communion. The one was symbolical, so was the other.

Shed for many—As the bread should be *broken*, so wine should be *poured*, both acts representing the action of death. *For many*—*For* so *many* as are born of Adam. "No stress is to be laid on this word πολλῶν, *many*, as not being πάντων, *all*, here; it is placed in opposition to the *one* life which is given—the *one* for *many*—and not with any distinction from πάντων."—*Alford.*

For the remission of sins—As without the retaining of the blood in the living system death ensues, so the blood is said in the ceremonial law to be the life. And so the *flowing of the blood* is the true ceremonial exhibition to the sight of vicarious or sacrificial *death.* Hence the apostle tells us that in the whole sacrificial system "without the shedding of blood there is no remission." So the flowing blood of the Redeemer, both from his extremities and from his side, is the visible manifestation of his death, as the reality of death is necessary both to the performance of the entire work of redemption and to represent the death of the soul, from which he would save men.

29. *I will not drink*—Of course he is not to drink his own blood He is not to derive life and salvation from his own atonement.

Drink it new—He will never drink it in its *sacrificial*, but in its *eucharistic* sense. Hence he does not say that he will drink the blood, but "this fruit of the vine." It is the *life part*, not the *death part* of the symbol of which he speaks. He will not drink the earthly wine even in its joyous character. But he will in the glorious kingdom drink that reality of which this life-symbol is the figure, namely, *life*, the *vita beata*, the *blessed life.* Our Lord could not drink the wine in its sacrificial character, because he had no sins to atone for. He would not now drink it in its joyous character because now was his time of sorrow; and he would indicate to his disciples that his joy was reserved for the day of his glorification.

It is a very coarse and degrading exposition of this text to make our Saviour say, as some do, that he will not drink the wine now, but he will drink real, physical wine in the resurrection body "with his saints during the thousand years" millennial reign. Such a reign of the saints in the resurrection body, with Christ, for a thousand years, on earth, is a fond fancy, unsupported by a just interpretation of Scripture. Our Lord means that he will not drink the symbolical wine; but will wait until he can drink the real wine which this typifies in the heavenly kingdom.

30. *And when they had sung a hymn*—According to the custom of the Jews, the passover was closed with singing what they called the Hallel, which consisted of Psalms cxiii–cxviii. It may be remarked that this is the only time our Lord is described as sanctioning by his example the exercise of singing. Before this closing exercise our Lord uttered the discourses and offered the prayer recorded in John, xiv–xvii.

a [2]hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, [d]All ye shall [e]be offended because of me this night: for it is written, [f]I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

32 But after I am risen again, [g]I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

34 Jesus said unto him, [h]Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

2 Or, *psalm.*—*d* Mark 14. 27; John 16. 32.
e Chap. 11. 6.—*f* Zech. 13. 7.

g Chap. 28. 7, 10, 16; Mark 14. 28; 16. 7.
h Mark 14. 30; Luke 22. 34; John 13. 38.

Went out into the mount of Olives—Our Lord is to be pictured to our minds as rising about nine or ten o'clock in the evening from the supper-table, and walking, followed by his accustomed train, (probably through the Golden, now St. Stephen's Gate,) down the gorge, and across the brook Kedron, until he comes into a wood or grove called Gethsemane. Verse 36.

§ 125.—The Intimation to the Disciples and to Peter of their Desertion and his Denials, 31–35.

This passage Matthew inserts out of its true order. It is to be considered not as occurring *after*, but *before* leaving the table, and before the extended discourses recorded by John. To take in the full account of all the intimations given to the reluctant Peter of his denials, we must read in the following order: John xiii, 36–38; Matt. xxvi, 31–33; Luke xxii, 31–33; Matt. xxvi, 34, 35. We thus find that before leaving the supper-table our Lord gave Peter three warnings of his folly. This of Matthew is the second. As it is the self-confidence of Peter that induces the first warning of our Lord, so, through all the three, Peter retains his protestations that he will prefer death rather than unfaithfulness.

31. *Shall be offended*—Literally, shall be entrapped into wrong. Shall be made to fail in your fidelity to me.

I will smite the Shepherd—Our Lord here quotes Zechariah as an illustration, or, as some of the best commentators suppose, as a direct prediction of his desertion in his affliction by his disciples.

32. *Go before you into Galilee*—By the smiting of the Shepherd the sheep should be scattered; and after his recovery from the blow by his resurrection, the Shepherd would go before his flock, and it should be again gathered in the old haunts in Galilee. The fulfilment of the promise is narrated in chap. xxviii, 16. The chief Shepherd marshalled his flock upon a mountain in Galilee. This was a most tender promise, that they should meet again amid the scenes of his earlier ministry. It does not imply that he would never appear after his resurrection, previous to meeting them in Galilee.

33. *Peter answered*—Peter is here, as often elsewhere, an impulsive, self-appointed spokesman. *All men*—He will stand with Christ against the world. This was the heroism of a brave man vowing fidelity to his chief. Had our Saviour really been a warrior, and allowed this high blood full play, Peter could have been as good as his word. See note on verse 74.

Be offended—See note on verse 31.

34. *Verily I say unto thee*—Our Lord is forced by Peter's boasts, nay, gainsayings, to bring out the clear, precise, sorrowful truth.

Before the cock crow—Mark and Luke say, "before the cock crow *twice*." This Matthew omits, because it was the second cock-crowing that was usually and technically called "the cock-crowing." Our Lord doubtless referred to the usual morning cock-crowing, since the

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

36 ¶ [1]Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

[1] Mark 14. 32-35; Luke 22. 39; John 18. 1.

midnight one is seldom heard, or in conversation taken into account. No difficulty can arise from the fact that the Jews kept no gallinaceous or barn fowls. The Romans may have done so, and the crow of the cock may have been heard from the Pretorium.

"In the crowing of a cock," says Buckhardt, "there are two remarkable things: One, that an animal so small should cry with so loud a voice; the other, that it sings at stated hours, and at such times as other birds are silent in sleep." He is created nature's living time-keeper. He is God's appointed watchman and crier in the midnight and at daylight, knowing and telling the hours by a wonderful instinct. That he is so inspired by a divine faculty, the Arabians expressed by their fancy that there was a white cock before the throne of God, whose voice gives the signal for all cocks on earth to crow. It was such a crier at whose voice the conscience of Peter was to be made to awake. But there was no power in the voice of the bird to express a divine meaning, had it not been interpreted beforehand by our Lord. So the voice of nature speaks with a divine wisdom, when we take God's word to interpret its language.

35. *Should die with thee*— Peter is able to recognise the fact that his Lord may die, and is ready to die by his side.

§ 131.—The Agonies of Gethsemane, 36–46.

36. *Unto a place called Gethsemane*— Supposing the last paragraph to be out of the order of time, we must connect this verse to verse 30. We suppose the supper-room to have been situated somewhere upon the eastern brow of Mount Zion. (See note on Mark xiv, 13.) From the supper-room we must trace our Lord going forth over the "great bridge" of the Tyropœon; passing through the temple precincts, and through the great front temple gate, (or perhaps through what was equivalent to the present St. Stephen's gate;) descending the valley of Jehoshaphat; crossing the brook Kedron, (about where its dry channel is now spanned by a small bridge of a single arch,) and walking, followed by the eleven, toward the ascent of Olivet. In a level space between the Kedron and the foot of the hill is a yard or garden, which, from the ancient olive trees there, is called *Gethsemane*, or *the press of oil*. There is still at the base of the Mount of Olives a secure enclosure, signalized by several most venerable olive trees, surrounded by a stone wall to designate the spot. Stanley says: "In spite of all the doubts that can be raised against their antiquity or the genuineness of their site, the eight aged olive trees, if only by their manifest difference from all others on the mountain, have always struck even the most indifferent observers. They will remain, so long as their already protracted life is spared, the most venerable of their race on the surface of the earth; their gnarled trunks and scanty foliage will always be regarded as the most affecting of the sacred memorials in or about Jerusalem, the most nearly approaching to the everlasting hills themselves in the force with which they carry us back to the events of the Gospel history." Captain Lynch says that these olives are one thousand years old; and as the olive tree reproduces from the same root, these trees are the radical descendants from the same germ as those of our Saviour's time. By the word *place* is generally understood a villa or cluster of houses, to which the garden was an appendage.

37 And he took with him Peter and [j] the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, [k] My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further,

[j] Chap. 4. 21.

[k] John 12. 27.

37. *Peter and the two sons of Zebedee*—The whole body of the eleven disciples went with our Lord to Gethsemane; but from the entire number he now selects Peter, James, and John, "the elect among the elect," to attend him at a little distance from the rest in the moments of his agonizing prayer. These had been selected to witness his glorification upon the mount of transfiguration, and they were now selected to be witnesses of the deep humiliation of the garden.

Began to be sorrowful—The first moment of the terrible hour had now arrived, and our Lord receives the first stroke of atoning sorrow from an invisible source. At the instant of his leaving the eight disciples the trial of sorrow *began*. For this whole scene of Gethsemane is to be looked upon, not as an hour of *fear* over his approaching trial, but as the first and, perhaps, far most terrible part of the atoning agony. The sufferings of the cross were, we conceive, from the visible powers of earth; the sufferings of the bitter *cup* and the bloody sweat were from the invisible powers of hell. The garden was the place of assault from the interior powers of darkness, as the cross was the place of the exterior assaults of men. Both were correspondent parts of the same great work. (For a view of this entire subject, I refer to my Sermon on Substitutional Atonement.)

38. *My soul is exceeding sorrowful*—Jesus then had a purely human *soul*. The doctrine of the Monophysites, that he had only a human body, of which God was the only soul, is not true. That human soul, Luke informs us, in his childhood increased in wisdom and in favour with God and man. Hence our Lord was complete man. His mind, as human, was subject to limitations. Beyond its human circle were innumerable things it did not know; though doubtless, his mind was so divinely illuminated as not to be liable to positive involuntary falsity or mistake.

Exceeding sorrowful—Our Saviour here speaks not of fear, that is, of the approaching cross, but of sorrow. A supernatural woe overwhelms and all but sinks him before the cross arrives. "He trod the winepress of the wrath of God."

Sorrowful even unto death—Not sorrowful in anticipation of death; but a sorrow, not his own, pressed so heavily and so damply upon him, that it would drown and quench the spark of life but for the divine aid impregnating and strengthening his human person. What sorrow was this? Doubtless the prophet Isaiah (liii, 4) furnishes the true answer: "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." We do not here find any warrant for the supposition that God, the Father Almighty, poured the thunderbolts of personal anger on his suffering Son. But as Christ suffered as a substitute for a sinful world, so he did voluntarily, by his own sad consent, encounter all the woe that could be inflicted by hell and earth. (the natural executioners of absolute justice under the government of God,) and thus with his infinite dignity do honour to the law of eternal justice. And in view of this, having done homage to justice in his own person, he is entitled to bestow paradise and confer righteousness on all who obediently accept him as their substitute and Redeemer.

Tarry . . . watch—They were to watch, yet at a reverent distance. The Saviour, as if powers other than human were haunting his soul, yearns to be in reach of human sympathy.

39. *And he went a little further*—Luke says, "He went about a stone's cast

and fell on his face, and [l] prayed, saying, [m] O my Father, if it be possible, [n] let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, [o] not as I will, but as thou *wilt*.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

l Mark 14. 36; Luke 22. 42; Heb. 5. 7.
m John 12. 27.
n Chap. 20. 22.——*o* John 5. 30; 6. 38; Phil. 2. 8.

So that there were three divisions of the little band: there were the eight disciples; the three chosen ones; and, at the distance of a "stone's throw," the suffering Saviour. While he suffers *they* slumber.

And prayed—The disciples were entreated to *watch* with our Lord, but not to *pray* with him or for him. That work he does alone, and asks no participation. They cannot pray his prayer. He may intercede for them, not they for him. *Saying*—The disciples could not have heard this prayer. The distance was too great, and they were even unable to keep awake. They must have learned the truth from our Lord's own explanations of his sufferings after his resurrection. See Luke xxiv, 27, 32.

O my Father—This prayer has three distinct points: the appeal, the deprecation, and the resignation.

The purpose of recording this prayer is great. It contains a profound lesson, how under affliction the sufferer may innocently writhe under the pain, may ask to be delivered, *up to the point of the divine will.* But at that point, however deep the agony, the resignation must be absolute. *Father*—However near the paternity of God, it still leaves him the right and the reason to inflict upon us terrible sorrows. Yet true faith looks up, even to his frowning face, with a filial claim. *If it be possible*—The possibility here meant presupposes that the solid plans of redemption must be undisturbed. *If*, without lifting up these foundations, *it be possible.* *This cup*—What was *this cup?* Not the crucifixion; but the present supernatural agonies of the garden. For, as his sorrows were greater than his strength, they opened up before him a just and true fear that a complete catastrophe, ever to unknown depths of failure, could result. Those terrible results lay as dregs at the bottom of the cup. And as Paul says, (Heb. v, 7:) *He was heard in that he feared.* From that fearful and inevitable *break-down* which he justly feared, and could escape only by obtaining supplicated aid, he was saved. But was this failure truly possible? Not only possible but surely certain, but for the power of this same faithful prayer, and for the true spirit in which the Redeemer offered it. O how narrow was the pass of danger through which our Jesus trod to his and our redemption! *Pass from me*—Saint Paul truly says that this prayer was *heard.* Causes were bearing down upon this lonely victim, as sure to crush as the rail-car would the shrinking infant lying on its track. Before the dregs of the cup were reached, the draught attained its limit! So God shall temper our trial to our strength, and our strength to our trial, if but the earnest prayer be put forth and the deep submission be retained. *Not as I will*—His own individual *will* was but a *wish*, which could not be wrong so long as it existed in complete submission to God's will. To sacrifice our own preferences, in order that our wills may be one with God's, is true resignation.

40. *Findeth them asleep*—Luke says they were asleep for sorrow. It seems as if the air of that night were dense with fearful, supernatural influences, weighing them down with stupor. It was as though a deadly vapour from the bottomless pit steeped their spirits. *Watch with me one hour*—There is, doubtless, rebuke in this question; but it is, we think, uttered more with the purpose of marking for us the fact that the pressure under which Jesus struggled was, even in its proximity, too much for them.

41 [p]Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: [q]the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your*

p Mark 13. 33; 14. 38; Luke 22. 40, 46; Eph. 6. 18.

q Rom. 7. 18, 25; 1 Cor. 9. 27; Gal. 5. 16, 17, 24.

41. *Watch*—The words *wake* and *watch* are different forms of the same term. Yet to watch is more than to be awake. It implies that our wakeful powers are exerted to guard against the evil. *Pray*—While we exert our own energies against the evil powers, let us also supplicate divine aid. *That ye enter not into temptation*—As a fragile boat would avoid the rocks and rifts, so should the feeble Christian avoid the dangers of trials that may wreck him. *The spirit*—Of the sincere but wavering disciple. *Is willing*—Both to wake and to conquer the tempter. *The flesh*—Of that disciple. *Is weak*—It is weighed down and conquered by the tempter's influences, or it is overcome in the hour of conflict.

How true a description was this of the disciples, as, for instance, Peter! His spirit was willing to *watch*, but Satan weighed him down through the flesh. His spirit was willing to adhere to his Master, but Satan overcame him through fleshly fear. But does our Lord intend this as an excuse for Peter, and an exemption from guilt? Rather, he renders it as a reason for his admonition to watch and pray, the neglect of which gave Satan his advantage over their earthly nature.

42. *He went away again*—In human sympathy the Saviour finds no resource. He is completely alone. He turns again from man to God. *If this cup may not pass*—His prayer here has yielded the point. He prays no longer, *Let it pass;* but, If it may not pass, *Thy will be done.* "Thy will be done" limits not only all murmur, but all prayer.

44. *The third time*—Thrice, as if in a perfectly restless agony that allows no repose, did our Lord leave his three disciples to go and suffer and pray alone. What a loneliness was that amid the darkness of the memorable spot, when the Divine Man bore the sufferings of a world's sin, and wrought the reconciliation between heaven and earth! It was the central hour in human history; and he was the most wonderful spectacle, perhaps, though no human eye beheld him, that any eye, human or superhuman, ever beheld.

44. *Saying the same words*—Form utters the same words from a want of feeling; earnestness repeats from abundance of feeling.

Luke adds: "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven strengthening him." This marks the climax and the close of his present *cup.*

45. *Cometh he to his disciples*—For the last time he now returns; for the betrayer is at hand, and from the invisible struggle with hell he is next to undergo the visible struggle with men.

Sleep on now, and take your rest—But why should he bid them sleep now when the tramp of the soldier is almost in their hearing? Of all the renderings of this verse to meet this query, I think the best is that which by merely changing the punctuation, which is of no authority, makes it a question. Sleep ye on *now*, and take your rest? Is it a

rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.
46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

47 ¶ And [r] while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

[r] Mark 14. 43; Luke 22. 47; John 18. 3; Acts 1. 16.

time for slumber when the betrayer is on the approach? There is another meaning admissible. The whole matter is now decided, and you may sleep on, as watching is needless.

The hour—The great suffering, atoning hour is come; and the executioners of vicarious justice, though *they* mean it not, are now at hand.

Let us be going—Our Lord now directs his face toward the terrible sufferings of the cross. He is strengthened, and calm from his past agony. He meets his betrayer, his foes, his judges, with a majesty which shows that he is Lord even of those to whom he submits. His glory even in this his suffering is most particularly described in the narrative of John.

46. *Behold, he is at hand*—"As I sat beneath the olives, and observed how very near the city was, with what perfect ease a person there could survey at a glance the entire length of the eastern wall, and the slope of the hill towards the valley, I could not divest myself of the impression that this local peculiarity should be allowed to explain a passage in the account of the Saviour's apprehension. Every one must have noticed something abrupt in his summons to the disciples: 'Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.' Matt. xxvi, 46. It is not improbable that his watchful eye at that moment caught sight of Judas and his accomplices, as they issued from one of the eastern gates, or turned round the northern or southern corner of the walls, in order to descend into the valley. Even if the night was dark, he could have seen the torches which they carried, and could have felt no uncertainty respecting the object of such a movement at that unseasonable hour."—*Prof. Hackett.*

§ 132.—APPREHENSION OF JESUS, 47–56.

While the solemn scenes of the Last Supper and of Gethsemane are transpiring, a very different business is going on between Judas and the Jewish authorities. The armed band is furnished; he knows the customary place of Jesus and his twelve; and now, lo! he comes. To show that he truly lays down his life with full power to retain it, our Lord for a moment by divine power overwhelms his assailants. (See John xviii, 4–9.) He meets with cutting rebuke the treacherous kiss of the betrayer. He arrests the sword of Peter and heals the wound it inflicted. He reproves the shamefulness of their armed band, and declares that he submits only to the divine necessity of fulfilling the prophetic Scripture. His disciples flee; the evangelist Mark is all but apprehended. (Mark xiv, 51.) The Saviour then is in the hands and at the mercy of his enemies.

47. *Lo, Judas*—The deed by which his name is forever a term of abhorrence is now in course of completion. *Staves*—The plural of *staff*. They were nearer canes than clubs. Although it was full moon, they came, as John informs us, with torches and lanterns. Judas led the way, going before them. Luke xxii, 47.

With him a great multitude—By what authority was Jesus now arrested? and of whom or what did this multitude consist?

To the first question we may answer, that in Judea there was an inferior native or Jewish government, under the dominion of the Roman government. Of the Jewish government the chief magistrate was the high priest. The legislative authority resided in the Sanhedrim. It was by the Jewish authority, or at least at their prosecu

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; [s] and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, [t] Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and

[s] 2 Samuel 20. 9.

[t] Psa. 41. 9; 55. 13.

tion, that our Lord is now arrested and taken before their high priest, to answer for offence against the Jewish law.

The multitude who apprehended Jesus were of the following four classes: 1. *The band*, (John xviii, 3,) being a detachment from the garrison of five hundred Roman soldiers, who, in the fortress of Antonia, overlooking the temple, kept the Jews in awe. A detachment was ever ready to be sent when the commander was informed that a disturber needed to be taken in custody. So that thus much Jesus was apprehended by the loan of a Roman body. 2. *The captains of the temple*, (Luke xxii, 52,) who came, doubtless, attended by their guard or police, men who kept order at the temple. 3. Several of the Jewish dignitaries attended to see the work carefully done; namely, (verse 47,) chief priests, zealous Pharisees, and elders. 4. Servants of these dignitaries, (John xviii, 18,) both private and official, like Malchus. Our Lord was thus arrested by the Jewish authority, partly using Roman instrumentality.

49. *Forthwith he came to Jesus . . . and kissed him*—As, in verse 46, Jesus said, "Let us be going," he turned his firm face to his foes, yet unseen, and walked forth to meet them. His disciples—first the three, and then the eight—start as we may suppose from their slumbers, and follow him along in irregular train. Thus, as Jesus alone leads the little band of his peaceful followers, Judas leads the hostile multitude of assailants. They two singly meet—the Divine victim and the diabolical betrayer—face to face. The traitor, prostituting the purest signal of love to the purpose of death, accomplishes the greatest masterpiece of treachery known to the universe. The Saviour calmly accepts the kiss; and surely, amid all the mockeries he suffered, this kiss was the most repulsive. Well did the German writer, Pfenninger, (quoted by Stier,) remark: "Wouldst thou know what Satan can do and God can suffer—what the basest of mankind can commit and the best of mankind can bear? behold the lips of Judas who kisses, and the cheek of Jesus who receives the kiss!" *Hail, Master*—The same lips that gave the false kiss preceded it with this false salutation. It was doubtless uttered with a loud voice. It proclaimed to the soldiery, "I have found the man I betray." It proclaimed to our Lord, "You have found the man who betrays you." The question at the supper-table, "Master, is it I?" now changes to the affirmation, "Master, it is I!"

50. *Friend*—Rather, *companion, associate*. For the sincere Saviour could hardly call him *friend*. *Wherefore art thou come?*—Our Lord puts in this question, as Judas well knows, not in order to *learn*, but to make Judas *think*. What errand is it for which you, a disciple, have now come to your Lord? And then he develops his full knowledge by the question supplied by Mark: "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" To *betray* is bad enough; to *betray the Son of man* is worse; to betray him *with a kiss* is worst of all.

With meek majesty, showing even at that very moment that he is Lord, Jesus accepts this beginning of insults from man. But for a brief interval (John xviii, 4–9) he holds his foes at bay by the secret restraint of his power before he yields to the arrest. This he does to demonstrate that he lays down his life of himself. For the same reason he utters the declaration in verse 53.

laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

51 And behold, [u]one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: [v]for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me [x]more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, [y]that thus it must be?

u John 18. 10.—v Gen. 9. 6; Rev. 13. 10.
w 2 Kings 6. 17; Dan. 7. 10.

y Isaiah 53. 7, &c.; verse 24.
Luke 24. 25, 44. 46.

Took him—As soon as the divine influence, by which the multitude were withheld, was in a measure withdrawn, they used their power to apprehend him.

51. *One...drew his sword*—Two swords, as appears by Luke xxii, 38, were in possession of the disciples, and perhaps two disciples proposed to resist, as appears probable by Luke xxii, 49. Our Lord is being bound and gives no reply. But one of them, Peter, draws his unbidden sword. The Greek word for *sword* here used is *μάχαιρα, machaira*, and signifies a *knife*, which was used either as a weapon, as a slaughter-knife, or a sacrificial knife for slaying and dividing the victim. The two knives used by the two disciples in preparing the passover lamb were, probably, the *swords* in possession on the present occasion. *A servant of the high priest*—John tells us his name was Malchus. Jesus requests the officers to pause until he could remedy the matter, and he heals the ear of Malchus and utters the following rebuke.

Not one step can the multitude stir while our Lord is engaged in this work and uttering these words. They obey their Lord, unconscious of his supremacy or the secret of their own obedience. And why did not they cease to bind him when they saw his miracles? We answer, the very fact that they found themselves *able* to bind him induced them to proceed. They doubtless paused in surprise at his deed. Yet, since he was so weak as to submit and to be bound, it was plain, (so they inferred that he was a mortal and a malefactor. If he is supernatural, why does he not break our bands and drive us from his presence and become King Messiah? Our Lord answers in the following verses. How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled?

Smote off his ear—He meant doubtless to smite off his head; but perhaps the same power that healed, prevented the true aim of the blow.

52. *Sword into its place*—The *sword* has its *place*, but its *place* is not the hands of the apostles. Our Lord does not command the *sword* to be flung away. As a recognized instrument of governmental authority, the stern asserter of law and peace, it has its place. *Take the sword...perish with the sword*—It is plain that this was intended as stating the result of any attempt at resistance on the part of the disciples. But it is expressed with comprehensive wisdom, so as to be true as a general law. At least it states a law of contingency to which all who follow the profession of arms are to submit. We take the sword under the full chance of perishing by it.

53. *Thinkest thou*—Addressed to Peter to show him that *there* was no place for, because no need of, a human sword. How contemptible to suppose that He needs thy sword, at whose prayer legions of angels would troop from the skies.

Twelve legions—A legion to each apostle, naming the official number notwithstanding the defection of Judas.

54. *Scriptures be fulfilled*—So far as man is concerned, he is really and truly

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done, that the [z]scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then [a]all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 ¶ [b]And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to

[z] Lam. 4. 20; ver. 54.—[a] See John 18. 15.

[b] Mark 14. 53; Luke 22. 54; John 18. 12, 13, 24.

under no compulsion, but lays down his life of himself. But there is a *higher law* by which he is most perfectly bound. The counsel of God is, that he shall pursue a certain course of duty, and that course has been predicted in the Scripture. The plan of God must be obeyed, and the Scriptures must not be falsified. From all which we argue that our Saviour was intrinsically able to break the Scriptures; but that the all-wise Jehovah did select of all possible beings to be Messiah that one who, with full power to disobey, would yet most perfectly obey his will. See note on Matt. iv, 1–11.

55. *In that same hour*—While led in bonds by the band. *To the multitudes*—Luke says, "to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and elders." It was doubtless in hearing of the multitudes, but intentionally aimed at the dignitaries mentioned. *Come out*—Voluntarily, not sent out by authority, like the poor soldiery. These dignitaries were the principal and guilty movers. And so anxious were they to see it done, that they compromised their dignity in coming out to the spot at that late hour. *As against a thief*—Rather a robber. They knew his purity, his holiness, his mysterious power of rebuke. Yet they would slay him as a malefactor. *To take me*—Why was so formidable a body sent to apprehend a single individual? Doubtless they feared his miraculous powers, and had a sort of vague notion that a mighty force was necessary to overcome him. When they felt his miraculous repressive influences, and saw his last miracle of healing, they were probably alarmed. But when they saw him still submit they imagined themselves too strong for him

Daily—His teaching was *daily*; their assault is *nightly*.

Luke adds to our Lord's words, "but this is your hour and the power of darkness." These words further explain that our Lord submits because his ministry is finished, and the work of suffering at the hands of sinners has commenced.

56. *But all this was done*—Mark puts words somewhat similar to these into the mouth of our Lord; but it is plain that these are the words of the evangelist. No doubt our Lord expressed the sentiment which the evangelist expresses. *All the disciples forsook him and fled*—Forbidden to fight, and unable to aid their Master, nothing save flight seemed obvious to the disciples. Passive courage is far more difficult than action. In the moment of panic, it hardly occurred to them to walk by his side, and meet, if need be, the malefactor's death. From Gethsemane the whole band proceeds back to the city, perhaps through the gate in front of the temple, and, if we trace its course aright, crossing the bridge of the Tyropœon, reaches the palace of Caiaphas and Annas, on the northernmost part of Mount Zion, between the Armory and Millo. (See our plan of Ancient Jerusalem.)

§ 134.—Jesus before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrim, 57–68.

We should not know from Matthew that our Lord was led to Annas, or Hananiah, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, before he was led to Caiaphas. John details the facts that occurred before Annas. From Annas, he was sent bound to Caiaphas, who was then the high priest, and whose residence may have adjoined that of Annas. While

Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

60 But found none: yea, though [c] many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came [d] two false witnesses,

61 And said, This *fellow* said, [e] I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

62 [f] And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

63 But [g] Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, [h] I adjure thee by the living God, that thou

c Psalm 27. 12; 35. 11; Mark 14. 55; So Acts 6. 13. d Deuteronomy 19. 15.——e Chapter 27. 40; John 2. 19.——f Mark 14. 60.——g Isaiah 53. 7; chapter 27. 12, 14.——h Leviticus 5. 1; 1 Samuel 14. 24, 26.

Christ was before Annas, the Sanhedrim was assembling at the palace of Caiaphas, preparatory to the arraignment of Jesus before them.

57. *Where the scribes and the elders were assembled*—The usual place of assemblage for the great Sanhedrim was at the council room in the temple precincts. But this being an extraordinary, perhaps irregular and partial meeting, is held at the palace of the pontiff.

58. *Followed him afar off*—Though, with the rest, Peter had fled, he was by no means contented to leave his Master without knowing his fate; hoping, perhaps, that he would yet by some unknown turn deliver himself. He follows him to the palace of the high priest, to know what will be the result.

59. *Sought false witness*—The consequences of their haste now alarmed the conspirators. Precipitated by the offer of Judas to betray Jesus, they had him on their hands before the accusation was planned and the evidence arranged. They have a criminal without a crime. As they dare not sentence him to death without some satisfactory inculpation, they are in a strait for charges and evidence

60. *Found none*—They found plenty of false witnesses, but they found none that gave in testimony which was *evidence* before a Roman court to secure their victim's death.

61. *This fellow*—The word *fellow* is added by the translators; but the contempt implied in the word is also implied in the Greek word for THIS. *Destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days*—This was false testimony so far as the sense was concerned; but it seemed to contain more consistent fact and more plausible charge than anything else they could procure. Our Lord had said, (John ii, 19:) "Destroy the temple and I will build it again in three days." There was surely no hostility to the temple in this; for the destroying was supposed to be performed by them, and the rebuilding by himself.

62. *Answerest thou nothing?*—Our Lord was most wisely silent; for what was there in his words, thus given in evidence, to answer? The high priest here behaves most unbecomingly in endeavouring to give importance to what he must have been conscious was nothing.

63. *Held his peace*—Thus at once defeating the unjust judge, and calling to mind the prediction of the prophet: "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." How valuable a gift is the talent for judicious silence! *I adjure thee*—The high priest now takes a new turn. The testimony

tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, [i]Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man [k]sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 [l]Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses?

i Daniel 7. 13; chapter 16. 27; 24. 30; 25. 31; Luke 21. 27; John 1. 51; Acts 10. 42; Romans 14. 10; 1 Thessalonians 4. 16; Revelation 1. 7. *k* Psa. 110. 1; Acts 7. 55.—*l* 2 Kings 18. 37; 19. 1.

said something about rebuilding the temple. Now the glorious rebuilding of the temple was one of the popular things ascribed to the Messiah. "This man then," says the high priest to himself, "I understand to be a claimant to the Messiahship." He therefore puts the adjuration, which every Jew was bound to answer truly. *The Christ, the Son of God*—The high priest doubtless knew that these two titles meant, according to prophecy, the same being. He joins the two together, with an air of great solemnity, for the purpose of making the claim to them both appear more formidable.

64. *Thou hast said*—The same in sense is given by Mark: "I am." This was a solemn moment. The titular high priest of the Jews, and their eternal High Priest, are now face to face. The *substance* is arraigned before the judgment bar of the *shadow*. One is the representative of the Jewish nation; the other is its Messiah and its true king. The representative, in whom for the time being the nation is embodied, puts the great question, "Are you the Messiah?" The Messiah "witnesses a good confession." He pronounces the solemn affirmative, "I AM." And he is REJECTED. *The great act is consummated.* Well might the high priest *rend his clothes.* Not because his prisoner had spoken blasphemy, but because himself had denied the Lord that bought him.

Nevertheless—Should rather be *moreover. Hereafter*—Through all the circumstances of his humiliation, Jesus foresaw with unwavering faith the day of his own exaltation. *Shall ye see*—Ye who now see me your *prisoner* will then see me your *Judge. The Son of man*—He does not say *me*, but speaks of himself by that title which the Old Testament ascribes to the Messiah.

Sitting on the right hand of power—That is, of Omnipotence. *Coming in the clouds of heaven*—The words are taken from Daniel vii, 13. The prophet is describing Christ's coming into the presence of his Father to be invested with all power. Its true fulfilment took place at the resurrection. (See on Matthew xxviii, 18.) But as the same Lord will come at the judgment day in that same glory, so the words that describe that same glory are well used, although in a different transaction. The glory wherewith Christ was invested at his resurrection, though mostly unseen by mortal eye, was the same glory as that with which he will be visibly invested at his second coming.

65. *The high priest rent his clothes*—"This was not contrary to the law of Lev. xxi, 10; for that referred either (but improbably) only to the sacred vestments at the time of sacrifice, or (more properly) only to lamentation for the dead. We see in 1 Macc. xi, 71, and in several passages of Scripture, that high priests rent their garments; indeed Sepp tells us that it was prescribed to them actually that they should rend them from *below* upward."—*Stier.*

Spoken blasphemy—In claiming to be the Son of GOD and Judge of mankind. The skill of the high priest is successful in eliciting some ground of charge against JESUS. But it is at a terrible cost, for he fairly makes issue with the Judge of the earth! Jesus Christ affirms himself in the presence of the Jewish nation to be the Messiah, and they pronounce him worthy of death for the claim. What a commentary is all subsequent history upon the issue of that moment!

behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and said, [m] He is guilty of death.

67 [n] Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and [o] others smote *him* with [3] the palms of their hands,

68 Saying, [p] Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

m Lev. 24. 16; John 19. 7.—*n* Isa. 50. 6; 53. 3; chap. 27. 30.

o Luke 22. 63; John 19. 3.—3 Or, *rods.*

p Mark 14. 65; Luke 22. 64.

66. *What think ye?*—He presses his advantage to an immediate vote. *Guilty of death*—His crime is blasphemy; that is the charge. He is *worthy of death;* that is the penalty. And the verdict is unanimous. Now why did not immediate execution follow? The obstruction is a formidable one. The Jews are under the Roman government. The Romans have taken from them the power of life and death. Besides, the Scriptures require that he should suffer death from Gentile hands, a reason of which they are unaware.

67. *Then did they spit in his face*—Probably upon the retirement of the high priest the apprehenders of Jesus (Luke xxii, 63) and the crowd proceeded to these insults. He who had at his first arrest plentifully demonstrated his absolute power over his adversaries, now bows his head in complete abandonment to all which their rage pleases to inflict.

Buffeted him—Struck him with the clenched fist, and then with the palms or flat hands.

68. *Prophesy unto us*—He who claims to be chief of prophets should now give us a specimen of his prophetic powers. Matthew omits to tell us that he was blindfolded, so that they were here putting his prophetic powers to a mock test. Compare these insults before the Jews, which alluded to his claims of Messiahship, with the insults by the Romans, which alluded to his political claims. See note on xxvii, 26–30.

Thursday, Midnight.

§ 133.—Peter's Denial and Repentance, 69–75.

Matthew now suspends the narrative in regard to Jesus, and, out of the precise chronological order, gives the sequel in regard to Peter. When the multitude led Jesus to Caiaphas he followed afar off. And when, according to John, they stopped by the way at the house of Annas, while the Sanhedrim were assembling to Caiaphas, he went to the door and was admitted by the porter, through the interference of John, who was known to the high priest. While our Saviour was within the apartment of Annas undergoing examination, (not while he was before Caiaphas,) the events of the three denials are taking place without.

To understand the transaction we must figure to ourselves the ancient mode of building. The Eastern houses are not like ours, built many stories high. They extend in lengthened oblong rooms on the ground; and these oblongs are so built as to enclose a square yard or court in the centre.

The entrance through the street door into the porch leads either through into the court, or into the side rooms. Is was in such a court that the fire was

69 ¶ [q]Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy [r]speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then [s]began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know

q Mark 14. 66; Luke 22. 55; John 18. 16, 17, 25.

r Luke 22. 59.—s Mark 14. 71; Jer. 17. 9.

made when Peter uttered his first denial; while our Lord may be supposed to be in the reception and business room opposite, that is farthest from and parallel to the street, which must be reached from the porch by crossing the court.

PETER'S FIRST DENIAL. The place, in the court at the fire.

69. *Now Peter sat without in the palace*—Or open court. He was without the apartment in which Jesus was examined. The Greek word here rendered *palace*, means the court or square yard enclosed by the building. Mark does not mention the making of the fire; but it is curious to note that he presupposes it by saying that Peter was warming himself when the damsel spoke to him. Mark xiv, 67.

Thou also—There is a similar fact in regard to this little word *also*. Matthew states nothing by which we are able to solve its meaning. Why *also?* But John tells us that he (John) had just introduced Peter to this damsel (who was the portress) and gained admittance for him. *Also* means, then, *as well as John.* We may add that the fact of John's safety would seem to show that Peter was in little danger. Perhaps the only ground of fear was the fact that he had taken the sword and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. So that Peter's extra bravery *then* is the cause of his extra cowardice *now.*

70. *I know not what thou sayest*—So far from being *guilty* of your charge, I do not even know what it *means.*

PETER'S SECOND DENIAL. The place, the porch.

71. *Gone out into the porch*—As soon as he was able, Peter withdrew in fear from the scene of the charge. But it was only to encounter at the door a similar hazard. By comparing with *Mark* and *Luke*, it appears that *two* maidens and a man at that place recognized him at once. To them all he denies with an oath, a very convincing proof that he has not been a disciple of Jesus!

PETER'S THIRD DENIAL. The place, probably in the court after a while.

There is nothing to indicate clearly the time. But the morning was now approaching, for the cock soon crew.

73. *After a while*—John says *an hour. Thy speech bewrayeth thee*—Peter had ventured to utter some remark which brought out his Galilean brogue, and the bystanders noticed him. *Bewrayeth*—Detecteth.

74. *Curse and to swear*—No doubt he first swore, to show that he belonged not to the prophet of Nazareth; but now a real and insane rage seems to have complete mastery, and Satan is sifting him like wheat. But it was in this very depth of abandonment that the voice of convicting mercy reached him. It was the time for the monitory cock to crow for Peter, and he *crew.*

At this moment of gross denial and profanity Peter was in a state of mortal sin and condemnation. He had fallen from grace; and death, in his present impenitent condition, would have consigned him to remediless woe.

not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, [t] Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

[t] Verse 34; Mark 14. 30; Luke 22. 61. 62; John 13. 38.—[a] Psa. 2. 2; Mark 15. 1; Luke 22. 66; 23. 1; John 18. 28.—[b] Genesis 22. 9; Acts 9. 2· 28. 20; 2 Timothy 2. 9.

Luke tells us that "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter," and that Peter thereupon reflected upon his Lord's warning. Probably our Lord cast this glance as he was led from Annas to Caiaphas. Or at this third denial the door of the apartment where Jesus and Annas were may have been opened upon the court, and Peter may have painfully found himself denying and swearing under his Lord's glance. That glance doubtless was turned full upon him with a significance that called Peter to his recollections. It does not appear that Peter came into the examination room or was present with his Lord.

75. *Wept bitterly*—Tears are, indeed, of little use that result not in return to duty. Judas wept perhaps, but turned not. Peter wept, and what was better, he returned to Christ and became a faithful apostle.

Olshausen thinks that Peter's denial was so inconsistent with his real bravery as to constitute a true "enigma," explicable only on the hypothesis that he was under a temptation greater than he could bear. On the contrary, we venture to think *it was like the man.* He had active bravery, but not steady, passive firmness. Give him a sword, his fellow eleven for comrades, and his Lord for captain, and he would have been ready to storm the fortress of Antonia. But bid him put up his sword and stand the foeman's shafts, and you take the *man* out of him. He followed his Lord adventurously, and then denied him shamefully; just as he started to walk upon the waves and then sunk before the blast. Such *keeping* of character is sure proof of the truth of the Gospel history.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEN the morning was come, [a] all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

2 And when they had [b] bound

CHAPTER XXVII.

Friday of the Crucifixion.

§ 135.—JESUS TAKEN BEFORE PILATE, 1–14.

1. *The morning*—Of Friday, the day of the crucifixion. *All the chief priests and elders of the people*—The Sanhedrim. See note on chap. xxvi, 3.

2. *And when they had bound him*—Doubtless while the keepers of our Lord had been waiting for the morning they had relaxed the severity of his bonds. They now rebind him, and lead him forth. The entire Sanhedrim present seem to have gone in a body with their prisoner to the palace of Pilate. *Pontius Pilate the governor*—Pilate was at this time procurator of Judea, an office rather of a pecuniary nature, yet, in the irregularities of the times, extended over every department of government. He was the sixth governor of Palestine after the cessation of the royalty. He was noted for his severity, cruelty, and despotic will. On one occasion, contrary to the practice of the Roman governors, who respected as far as possible the religious peculiarities of subject provinces, he introduced the Roman standards into the city with the images of the emperor upon them, esteemed idolatrous by the Jews. When the Jews remonstrated he threatened to massacre them. Upon this they threw themselves unanimously on the ground, protesting that they would rather die than consent to the profanation; upon which the Roman governor relented. On another occasion, when the Jews seditiously opposed his expending the sacred money upon the city water-works, he sent a body of soldiers with concealed arms to fall upon them unawares, who committed a much greater massacre than he intend-

nim, they led *him* away, and [c]delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

3 ¶ [d]Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, [e]repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4 Saying, [f]I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that.*

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, [g]and departed, and went and hanged himself.

c Chap 20. 19; Acts 3. 13.—*d* Chap. 26. 14, 15.
e Job 20. 5, 51, 29; 2 Cor. 7. 10.

f Exodus 9. 27; 1 Samuel 15. 24; Romans 3. 19.
g 2 Samuel 17. 23; Acts 1. 18.

ed Saint Luke refers to a massacre by him, committed at a passover, when he mingled the blood of certain Galileans with the sacrifices they were performing. A similar cruelty in the massacre of certain Samaritans, after they had submitted, proved the ruin of Pilate. The Samaritan senate sent a complaint of his cruelty to Vitellius, president of Syria, by whom Pilate was ordered to Rome, to answer to the charge before the emperor Tiberius. Before he arrived Tiberius died; but Pilate was banished by his successor Caligula to Vienne in Gaul, where, in mortification for his disgrace, he committed suicide.

In his conduct at the trial of our Saviour, Pilate appears like a true Roman politician. He is on the side of justice, in regard to which his perceptions are acute and his procedures exact and just, so far as no passion or self-interest of his own interfered. He is versatile and inventive of expedients to rescue Jesus from an unjust death, until the Jews make him feel that such a course endangers his standing as Cesar's friend. He examines Jesus, and pronounces him innocent; he expostulates with the Jews; he endeavours to release him instead of Barabbas; he sends him to Herod; he presents him as an object of sympathy, to move the Jews to pity; he proposes to chastise and set him free, and, finally, he washes his hands in token of irresponsibility for Jesus's death. It was only to save himself from the danger of what he finally suffered, an arraignment before Cesar for maladministration, that he yielded the point. But to save his own life or interests, the life of a single man or of any number of men would have been readily sacrificed.

§ 139.—Repentance and Death of Judas, 3–10.

Matthew now interrupts his narrative of the fate of the Saviour to give his final account of Judas. It hardly seems probable that Judas would give up all for lost before the final sentence and surrender of Jesus by Pilate.

3. *Saw that he was condemned*—The actual perception of the result, and the clear consciousness of the enormity of the crime, produced in Judas's mind a revulsion. A conscious feeling also that he had sinned beyond mercy, seems to have possessed his soul. He felt that his trifling gains could never be used; and, with a desperate desire to know the worst of his case, he rushed through the gate of a voluntary death into the presence of his final Judge. *Repented himself*—Such a repentance as brings no true reformation. It was guilt starting back from the consequence of its doings. There is much repentance of this kind in the world of the lost.

4. *What is that to us?*—So unsympathizing are Satan and his agents to the victims they have ruined. He probably stood at the railing between the court of Israel and the court of the priests. (See Temple Plan.) The priests in their own court may have been arranging matters for the passover festivals. Judas flung the money probably over the railing upon the pavement at the feet of the priests.

5. *Hanged himself*—There is no discrepancy between this account and the narrative given in Acts i, 18. Judas hung himself near one of the precipices

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

8 Wherefore that field was called, [h] The field of blood, unto this day.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, [1] And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, [1] whom they of the children of Israel did value;

10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

11 And Jesus stood before

h Acts 1. 19.——*i* Zechariah 11. 12, 13.——1 Or, *whom they bought of the children of Israel.*

with which the environs of Jerusalem abound, and the rope breaking, perhaps intentionally on his part, he was precipitated down and dashed to pieces. On this point Prof. Hackett says: "I measured the precipitous, almost perpendicular walls in different places, and found the height to be, variously, forty, thirty-six, thirty-three, thirty, and twenty-five feet. Olive trees still grow quite near the edge of these rocks, and, no doubt, in former times they were still more numerous in the same place. A rocky pavement exists also at the bottom of the precipices; and hence, on that account, a person who should fall from above would be liable to be crushed and mangled as well as killed. The traitor may have struck in his fall upon some pointed rock and caused 'his bowels to gush out.'"

6. *The price of blood*—The true confession that they had bought Jesus for death. The money made abominable by certain crimes, was by law excluded from the treasury of God. Deut. xxiii, 18. Many retain a sort of ecclesiastical conscience while committing the grossest immoralities.

7. *Potter's field*—Pottery, or the manufactory of earthenware, was a very ancient art. The remains of it are found among the relics of the most ancient nations. The clay being dug from the surface, for the purposes of pottery, rendered the soil unfit for tillage or other uses, so that it was sold for the small price here paid.

8. *The field of blood*—The name stood as a memento of the direful sale and execution. The name, "called in their proper tongue Aceldama," is at the present day traditionally given to a spot south of the Valley of Hinnom. *Unto this day*—Unto the time that Matthew writes. This was perhaps about eight years of interval. Sceptics have quoted this phrase in proof that Matthew was written in a later age. But it is a curious coincidence, that we fell upon this phrase a few days since in a New York newspaper, in regard to an event not more than eight years distant.

9. *Then was fulfilled*—Verified by an event of which the words were strikingly expressive. *Jeremy*—This is no doubt a mistake of the transcribers. The true name is Zechariah, and the reference is to Zech. xi, 12, 13. The mistake arose probably because the contracted form of the name Zechariah, which would be Zriou, was taken for Jriou, the contracted form of Jeremy. The passage is quoted for sense, and not word for word, as is often the case with the evangelists. Their inspired interpretation is always a guarantee for the true sense of the passage which they quote in substance.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE, AND THE SURRENDER OF BARABBAS, 11–26.

11. *Jesus stood before the governor*—The Sanhedrim in a body, followed by their partisans, marched with their prisoner from the palace of Caiaphas to Pilate's abode, which probably was at the tower of Antonia, north of the temple. (See note on Matt. xxi, 12, and Temple Plan.) This tower was built by the Maccabees, the illustrious princes

the governor: [k] and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, [l] Thou sayest.

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, [m] he answered nothing.

13 Then said Pilate unto him, [n] Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 [o] Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

k Mark 15. 2; Luke 23. 3; John 18. 33.—*l* John 18. 37; 1 Tim. 6. 13.—*m* Chap. 26. 63; John 19. 9.

n Chap. 26. 62; John 19. 10—*o* Mark 15. 6; Luke 23. 17; John 18. 30.

of Judah, (see note on i, 17,) as a depository of the high priest's vestments, and rebuilt with great splendour by Herod. It was a fortress, but at the same time a most magnificent palace. To avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews decline entering Pilate's palace. We must, then, figure to ourselves the multitudes standing in the broad area before the palace, while Jesus is taken in, either to the court or some public apartment of the building, called thence "the Pretorium," or pretor's (governor's) office. Hence it appears by the narrative, especially in John, that Pilate alternately *went out unto them*, and *returned into the judgment hall*, or Pretorium, to Jesus. We may be aided in understanding this by supposing that in the diagram at xxvi, 68, the court answers to the pretorium; and the area or broad space where the Jews are, is at the place marked "street." It was towards this open yard that Pilate presents Jesus. John xix, 4.

From the Jews in the front area Pilate learns the charge, and that Jesus is brought before him because the Jews had no power to execute him. Pilate then enters the Pretorium and learns of Jesus that he claims to be a spiritual king. Pilate then goes out to the Jews and pronounces Jesus innocent. Then the multitude raises a clamour of accusations, to which Jesus is so serenely and firmly silent that the governor *marvelled greatly*.

Art thou the King of the Jews?—The fullest and most striking account of the colloquy between our Lord and Pilate is given by John, and full notes upon it belong to a commentary upon that evangelist. *Thou sayest*—An affirmative answer of the question. It is as *thou sayest.*

14. *The governor marvelled greatly*—It might not be so wonderful that a prisoner should make no defence; but the many circumstances of a mysterious nature, which Jesus refused to explain, greatly perplexed the governor.

15. *Was wont*—Was accustomed. The Jewish nation was under the Roman government, and there would often be men in prison whose crime was some attempt in favour of Jewish liberty, or some popular offence against the Roman power. Hence, when the governor came down from Cesarea to Jerusalem, it would be a popular act to grant pardon to some turbulent patriot in prison for sedition.

16. *A notable prisoner*—A famous outlaw. Mark says that he had raised "an insurrection," and that his adherents, who "had committed murder in the insurrection," were also, like himself, under arrest and in prison. As they probably lived by plunder, Barabbas is called "a robber." As a fierce and brave Jewish patriot, he had become *notable* or famous among the populace. He was, perhaps, like Robin Hood among the old English, hateful

18 For he knew that for [p] envy they had delivered him.

19 ¶ When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that [q] just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

[p] Prov. 27. 4; Isa. 26. 11.

[q] Zech. 9. 9; 1 John 2. 1.

to the government but popular with the masses.

18. *Knew that for envy*—Pilate was perfectly satisfied that the charge brought by the Jews against Jesus, as seeking to be the rival king against Cesar, was a fiction. He knew the innocence of the accused. When he surrendered him he was guilty of innocent blood. No washing of his own hands could cleanse his soul or clear his character in history.

From the other evangelists we learn to supply several facts omitted by Matthew. Pilate, on learning that Jesus was of Galilee, sent him to Herod, the Tetrarch of Galilee, who was then in Jerusalem, hoping that he would dispose of his case. But Herod, after putting Jesus to mockery, remands him back to Pilate. Pilate endeavours to induce the Jews to allow Jesus to be dismissed with a few stripes, and they refuse with clamour. After he had endeavoured to have him released by amnesty, and they prefer the release of Barabbas, he washes his hands, in token of protesting his innocence of the death of Jesus. They respond loudly by taking the responsibility of his blood upon their own heads and their children's. Pilate then surrenders Jesus apart, to mockery and scourges and then brings him out as a piteous spectacle, and presents him, with the words, Behold the man." So far from being melted at the sight, they cry out the more to "crucify him!" On his demanding for what possible reason Jesus is to be crucified, they reply, "Because he called himself the Son of God." Struck with this new charge, and with the strange assumption of this divine title by his prisoner, Pilate returns to Jesus to examine him, and is so impressed with his noble bearing as to make one more effort to save him. But at last the cry, "If you let this man go you are not Cesar's friend," settled the matter. Pilate did not bear to have his faithfulness to the emperor questioned, and to save his own position he sacrificed Jesus. He thus became sharer in their guilt. Taking his seat upon the tribunal of the pavement, so called, in front of his palace, he received the last rejection of Jesus by the Jews, and gave him up to death at about nine o'clock on Friday, the day of the crucifixion.

19. *The judgment seat*—He seats himself in order to pronounce the amnesty or release of Jesus or some other person. He makes every effort in his power to induce the Jews to demand the release of Jesus, but they prefer the outlaw to the just and holy one. *Judgment seat*—Or tribunal erected in the open court or area before the palace, with the people before it. *His wife*—Her name was Claudia Procula, and tradition says she was converted to Christianity by this dream. It is one of those minute coincidences which mark the accurate knowledge of the author of this Gospel, that it was only just at this time that Roman governors were allowed to have their wives with them. *That just man*—That innocent man. *This day*—Perhaps it was a morning dream, occurring to her after Pilate had gone forth upon the business which now occupied him. Morning dreams were held as specially prophetic. Stern as was the character of Pilate, it is clearly evident, as our comment on John will more fully show, that he was not a little affected by the circumstances of the trial and death of Jesus. Nor is the thought to be of course rejected that the same divine power that warned Joseph of Jesus's birth by a dream, may have warned Pilate by the same means to beware of a share in his death.

20 [r]But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, [s]Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

24 ¶ When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he [t]took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it.*

25 Then answered all the people, and said, [u]His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

26 ¶ Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when [v]he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

27 [w]Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the [2]common hall, and gathered un-

r Mark 15. 11; Luke 23. 18; John 18. 40; Acts 3. 14.——*s* Jer. 26. 15.——*t* Deut. 21. 6.——*u* Deut. 19. 10; Josh. 2. 19; 2 Sam. 1. 16; 1 Kings 2. 32; Acts 5. 28.——*v* Isa. 53. 5; Mark 15. 15; Luke 23. 16, 24, 25; John 19. 1, 16.——*w* Mark 15. 16; John 19. 2.——2 Or, *governor's house.*

20. *Chief priests and elders persuaded*—The people *had* been upon his side. They had brought him into Jerusalem with triumph, while the rulers were compelled to hide their heads in low murmurs. They dared not openly apprehend him, for fear of the people; but taking him secretly, and surrendering him with all the appendages of a culprit guilty of something, the people are induced to consider him as a deceiver and blasphemer and traitor. The very fact that he is there in fetters seems to prove that he is not divine, and so make out that he was a deceiver, who had claimed to be the Son of God. Nevertheless, when it comes to the point that he shall not be demanded for release, but the outlaw shall be preferred before him, it takes a fresh onset of persuasion to induce the people to take that step. Doubtless the friends of Jesus were mostly absent, frightened away by this fearful revolution.

21. *They said, Barabbas*—This was the deepest human degradation, to have the vilest of mankind preferred before him. He was held worse than the worst, and lower than the lowest.

22. *Let him be crucified*—This was the decisive utterance of the fatal word.

24. *Washed his hands*—An emblem of his own innocence of the murder. See note on xxvi, 18.

25. *His blood be on us*—Terrible imprecation of wrath upon themselves and offspring. In less than forty years from this exclamation the Romans came. They crucified such numbers of Jews that, Josephus says, there was no room for more crosses. Doubtless some of these very persons, and certainly their children, died by this very death, perhaps on the very spot.

SCOURGING BY PILATE AND DELIVERY FOR CRUCIFIXION, 26–31.

The purpose of this whole scene of course is to burlesque Jesus's claim to royalty. A notable king forsooth is this, for whom the proper crown is a garland of thorns, the sceptre a reed, the robe an old cast off cloak. Mock homage, interspersed with insults and injuries, completes the wretched drama.

26. *Scourged Jesus*—The Greek word here used is borrowed from the Roman *flagellum*, which was the scourge with which slaves were chastised before execution. It was composed of ox nerves, extremely sharp, interwoven with sheep bones, so as to lacerate the flesh.

27. *The common hall*—The Prætori

to him the whole band *of soldiers.*

28 And they stripped him, and [x] put on him a scarlet robe.

29 ¶ [y] And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

30 And [z] they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

x Luke 23. 11.—y Psa. 35. 15, 16; 69. 19; Isa. 49. 7; 53. 3; Heb. 12. 2, 3.—z Isa. 50. 6; chap. 26 67.

um, or court. See note on verse 11. *Whole band*—There were five cohorts of soldiers, comprising each about 600 men, retained by the governor at Cesarea, and one at Jerusalem. This one whole Roman cohort is therefore now summoned to perform or witness the degradation of the victim.

28. *A scarlet robe*—A kind of round cloak, which was confined on the right shoulder by a clasp, so as to cover the left side of the body, worn by military officers and called *paludamentum.* Those of the emperors were *purple.* This cloak or *robe*, called by Matthew *scarlet*, is by Mark called *purple.* The two colours blend into each other, and the words are interchangeable. The *scarlet* dye, however, was made from a shrub; the purple from a shell-fish.

29. *Had platted*—The old English verb to *piat* or *plait*, signifies to braid or interweave. *A crown of thorns*—The question has been raised whether this crown was intended for mockery or for pain. Undoubtedly mockery was the leading object, and yet that mockery is all the more effective by being made painful. A crown of straw would have been mockery; a crown of thorns was a painful mockery. What sort of thorns composed this crown is uncertain. But Haselquist, a Swedish naturalist, says, of the *Nabea Palisius Athanæi* of Alphinus, now *Zizyphus Spina Christi*, "In all probability this is the tree which afforded the crown of thorns put upon the head of Christ. It is very common in the East. This plant is very fit for the purpose, for it has many small and sharp spines which are well adapted to give pain; the crown might easily be made of these soft round and pliant branches; and what in my opinion seems to be the greater proof is, that the leaves very much resemble those of the ivy, as they are of a very deep glossy green. Perhaps the enemies of Christ would have a plant somewhat resembling that with which emperors and generals were crowned, that there might be a calumny even in the punishment."—*Kitto*, Art., Thorns.

A reed—A burlesque sceptre for this fictitious king. The *reed* is a plant with a hollow jointed stalk, growing in wet grounds. It was sometimes used for light walking canes, and one may have been taken from the bystanders for the present purpose. *Bowed...mocked... Hail*—These were all ironical offers of mocking homage to Jesus as he sat in a semblance of royalty. What followed was real and professed abuse and injury.

30. *Smote*—The blow of the reed would have been too light to inflict much pain upon any other part than the head, and there it would aggravate the pain of the thorns.

At the present day, such is the spirit of Christianity, the criminal is left to the serene but stern action of the law, without any such voluntary insults and tortures as these, which serve to deprave the perpetrators as much as they torture the victim.

After this scourging and mockery Jesus is led forth from the inner court or Pretorium to the door of the palace, by Pilate, who presents him before the multitude in the hope that the sorrowful sight may awaken pity and produce his release. He declares Jesus innocent. They reply, that by Jewish law he is liable to death for blasphemy in claiming to be the "Son of God." Startled at this supernatural name, Pilate takes Jesus again into the interior court, and demands of him what is his

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, [a] and led him away to crucify *him*.

32 [b] And as they came out, [c] they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 ¶ [d] And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

34 [e] They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and

a Isa. 53. 7.——*b* Num. 15. 35; 1 Kings 21. 13; Acts 7. 58; Hebrews 13. 12.——*c* Mark 15. 21; Luke 23. 26.——*d* Mark 15. 22; Luke 23. 33; John 19. 17.——*e* Psalm 69. 21; see verse 48.

true origin. Jesus retains his own mystery and silence; but Pilate coming forth, again pronounces Jesus innocent. At this point the Jews give Pilate the finishing stroke. If he lets this man go he is not Cesar's friend. Before that threat the iron will of Pilate bent and yielded. See John xix, 12–13.

The Roman emperors had ever lent a ready ear to the complaints of provinces against their governors. Augustus Cesar did so against Herod the Great. The remonstrances of the Jews prevented Archelaus from being king, and finally their complaints overthrew him. And Pilate himself was in fact ruined, as we have elsewhere narrated, by such a complaint of the Samaritans against him. He sacrificed Jesus, therefore, to his own security. See note on verse 2.

§ 140.—Leading forth and Crucifixion of Jesus, 32–34.

31. *Led him away to crucify him*—From the judgment hall of Pilate at the fortress of Antonia, Jesus is led forth to crucifixion. That he was led to a spot without the city gates, we are assured by St. Paul. Heb. xiii, 11–12. But in what direction, whether east or west, neither Scripture, nor any reliable tradition, nor any circumstantial evidence informs us. Tradition, indeed, of a later date has fixed upon a spot, where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre now stands as a monument of the event. (See map of city.) But clear circumstantial proof shows that the site of that church was not without the ancient city walls.

While our Lord was led forth a multitude, mostly women, follow him weeping. Jesus addresses them with a compassionate prophecy of the sorrows which the sins of their countrymen were bringing upon their heads. Luke xxiii, 27–31.

33. *Place called Golgotha*—This was a Hebrew word signifying a skull-place. It is in Latin Calvaria, and thus it is in Luke called Calvary, which is the common name in English. It was called thus, some think, because, being the usual place of execution, the skulls of malefactors whose bodies had been there buried often become visible. But more probably it was so called from a supposed resemblance of the mound to a human skull. Calvary might have been a little elevated, but it could not have been a mountain or mount. Dr. Barclay, (with reasoning that may stand as valid enough in the existing absence of any proof to the contrary,) identifies Golgotha with Goath, (Jer. xxxi, 39,) which he locates on the east, close between the city wall and the Kedron, a little north of Gethsemane. If that was the place of crucifixion, there, also, was the garden containing Joseph's new tomb. John xix, 17. The scene of bloody sweat, the crucifixion, and the entombment was then properly one.

34. *Vinegar to drink*—The fainting prisoner was brought to the place of execution, and the cross was taken from the shoulder of the bearer preparatory to driving the nails into his limbs; and they offer a stupefying potion to him, according to custom, to deaden the sense of pain. Jesus tastes it, as if to accept the insulting mercy; but declines to drink it, as it would obscure the clearness of his faculties. The *vine*

when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

35 [f] And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, [g] They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 [h] And sitting down they watched him there;

37 And [i] set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

f Mark 15. 24; Luke 23. 34; John 19. 24.
g Psalm 22. 18.

h Verse 54.—*i* Mark 15. 26; Luke 23. 38; John 19. 19.

gar mingled with gall is the same as the *wine mingled with myrrh*, mentioned by Mark; for the *wine* was so sour as to be truly *a vinegar*, and the word for *gall* would stand for anything *bitter*, as *myrrh*.

§ 141.—Transactions while on the Cross, 35–50.

35. *And they crucified him*—The victim was nailed to the wooden post, with his arms extended upon the cross beam, his four limbs being pierced by the spikes. The post sunk into the ground with a sudden shock, producing an agonizing torture. By pain, by loss of blood, and by mental suffering, death slowly and wearily would come. The cross was a Roman mode of execution, reserved for slaves and the vilest of the race, and therefore selected by the Jews, although not a Jewish punishment, as a proof of their contempt. The halter among us is scarce so ignominious a term of shameful suffering. Thence the cross became in the apostolic writings a symbol, not only of the atonement, but of the offence and contempt with which the Jews and Pagans viewed Christianity. At the same time it was the symbol of the suffering fidelity with which Christians adhered to their religion. It is now the ensign of Christian nations, and is a badge of Christian honour. It floats upon commercial banners and hangs upon the neck of beauty. The Romanists have carried their reverence for the material and formal cross too far; but as a visible symbol of Christianity it is worthy of Christian use, nor should there be a superstitious extreme in the very act of rejecting the superstitious use of the symbol.

The order of facts in the crucifixion of Jesus may be stated as follows: The two thieves are elevated on crosses by his side. Pilate fixes upon the cross of Jesus the superscription. The soldiers divide his garments. The passers-by and others revile him; while his mother and John and the women survey the scene at a distance with sorrow.

As the criminal was usually crucified naked, as far as decency permitted, the executioners divided his garments among themselves. It seems by John that there were four soldiers; and when they came to the coat of Jesus, inasmuch as it was seamless, they would not rend it, but cast lots for its possession. *Casting lots*—Each man's name was written upon a ballot and cast into a vessel or receiver of some kind; the vessel was shaken, and he whose name leaped out was the winner.

Parted his garments—Of the parting of his garments, the fullest account is given by John.

36. *Sitting down...watched*—The four Roman soldiers, who were the proper executioners, sat down to witness and secure the process of death. They witnessed the passing revilers, the sorrowing friends, the darkness, the confession of the thief, the draught given to drink, and the dying cry of the Lamb of God.

37. *Accusation*—The indictment or *charge* upon which he was executed. It was written with black letters upon a white ground. The purport of a criminal charge was often proclaimed also by the public crier, and may have been done in this case.

38 [j]Then were there two thieves crucified with him; one on the right hand, and another on the left.

39 ¶ And [k]they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, [l]Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. [m]If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said,

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

43 [n]He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

j Isaiah 53. 12; Mark 15. 27; Luke 23. 32, 33; John 19. 18.—*k* Psalm 22. 7; 109. 25; Mark 15. 29; Luke 23. 35.—*l* Chapter 26. 61; John 2. 19. *m* Chapter 26. 63.—*n* Psalm 22. 8.

38. *Two thieves*—A fuller account in regard to the thieves is given by Luke.

REVILING OF JESUS ON THE CROSS, 39–44.

In the extremity of his physical pain the Son of man must endure the utmost that human contempt can think and say and do. The accidental spectator, the chance specimens of our race; the chief priests, the representatives of rank, sacred and secular, are present. The powerful exert the uttermost of their power, and the vilest do their best and vilest. They utter taunts founded on calumnious misrepresentations of his words; they ridicule his kingship, and even his piety. They trample on his pretences, and exult over his weakness.

39. *Wagging their heads*—An accompanying gesture, expressive of the contempt uttered in their words.

40. *Thou that destroyest*—Our Saviour's real words did not express the *destroying* the temple, but *rebuilding* it if they destroyed it. There is a beautiful innocence in the words, which they have to pervert before they can make them condemnable. See note on xxvi, 21. *Save thyself*—Here is their strong argument. The people who had shouted but a day or two ago, "Hosanna to the Son of David," now plainly see their mistake. If this man were divine, the Messiah, the Son of God, he would certainly never have been caught and crucified. So the chief priests are after all right, and this man is an impostor. See note on xxvi, 51. The fact that he is crucified is proof that he ought to be crucified. So are men worshippers of success. *Come down from the cross*—All his miracles, his lessons, and the perfection of his character, go for nothing unless he perform this test miracle. Let him show his superiority over his enemies, assert his power, and save his own life. If he does not, then he is so far from being the Messiah that he is justly crucified for maintaining himself to be so.

41. *Chief priests...scribes and elders*—They are all there, and they all have their mock.

42. *He saved others; himself he cannot save*—A noble Saviour, forsooth, who cannot save himself! And yet, as learned men, they know or ought to know that the Old Testament foretold a suffering as well as a glorious Messiah. They ought to have remembered that it was by suffering that the Messiah was to save. *Come down from the cross*—And if he should come down from the cross, what then? What hope of mercy for his enemies? What would be the fate of men who say to him, The test of your Messiahship is to overcome our purpose of murdering you? And, still worse, if he should come down from the cross, and leave the great work of the atonement unfinished, what redemption for you miserable sinners?

43. *Let him deliver him*—Here is another argument. If God is on this man's side he will not suffer him to be slain.

44 [o]The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

45 [p]Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour [q]Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, [r]My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, [s]and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink.

o Mark 15. 32; Luke 23. 39.—*p* Amos 8. 9; Mark 17. 33; Luke 23. 44.—*q* Heb. 5. 7.

r Psalm 22. 1.—*s* Psalm 69. 21; Mark 15. 36; Luke 23. 36; John 19. 29.

44. *The thieves also*—Jesus has had the thief Barabbas preferred before him. He has been placed by the people below the lowest criminals. He is now placed by the executioners between these the chief of criminals. Such was the opinion of the world. And now the criminals themselves have their say; which is, that he is more criminal and contemptible than themselves. Few are so mean but they fancy there is somebody below them. At the bottom of all, in present estimation, is this Jesus. See note on verse 40.

§ 141.—The Darkness, the Relenting, and the Death, 45–50.

From the sixth hour to the ninth there was a wonderful darkness over the land. And already a relenting in men's hearts follows so solemn a token of divine displeasure. One of the thieves who had reviled Jesus repents and confesses the Messiah. When Jesus thirsts he is relieved; and the multitude stands in suspense to see whether a divine interposition will not in fact save him. The centurion confesses him the Son of God.

45. *From the sixth*—The Jews reckon twelve hours from sunrise to sunset. The sixth hour was, therefore, noon; and the ninth hour was three o'clock. *Darkness over all the land*—This was no eclipse, for astronomy allows none at this time. Neither was it what is sometimes called the sympathy of nature over the scene; for that is too poetical for the plain reality of the facts before us. But it was a token of divine displeasure, calculated to dismay the hearts of these wicked men, and awaken in them some misgiving as to the being they were crucifying.

46. *About the ninth hour*—At the close of the darkness. *Eli*—These words are the first verse of Psalm xxii, quoted by our Lord in the Syro-Chaldaic language, the language in common use. The evangelist gives them in the very words of Jesus, rather than in the Greek, to show the reason of their mistake who supposed that he called for Elias. These words do not, we think, contain any reference to the darkness, which was now disappearing, and which was given for his murderers rather than for him. The Saviour here applies the holy psalm to himself as prophetic. The particular words are expressive of the divine abandonment, of the departure of the divine presence as part of his atonement endurance. They are uttered by him to show that he is enduring an intolerable agony, deeper than any external infliction.

47. *This man calleth for Elias*—They confound the word Eli with Elias. We cannot think that this was a mockery.

48. *One of them ran*—In consequence of our Lord having said, "I thirst." Thrice was our Lord offered a draught. First, before he was nailed to the cross, a drugged cup was presented him to assuage pain. Next, (Luke xxiii, 36, the sour *wine* is offered in insult. And now it is given in kindness to assuage his thirst. *Took a sponge*—To absorb the liquid. *Put it on a reed*—The reed

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

50 ¶ [t] Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

51 And behold, [u] the vail of the temple was rent in twain

[t] Mark 15. 37; Luke 23. 46.—[u] Exod. 26. 31; 2 Chron. 3. 14; Mark 15. 38; Luke 23. 45.

was used to reach to the elevation of his mouth. It was a hyssop stalk.

49. *Let be*—This was not spoken to the soldier who was relieving his *thirst* with the *sponge*. As appears by Mark, the soldier himself joined in the expression. It means, "Wait and let us see if Elias will come to his rescue." These words plainly show that there was no jest. There was an actual suspense, awakened by the awful darkness, as to whether the divine interposition would not take place.

After this verse, I am inclined to place the prayer of the penitent malefactor, in Luke xxiii, 42, 43. Matthew (verse 44) clearly affirms that the *thieves* reviled him. Now it might be perfectly reasonable to say, as some do, that Matthew uses the plural for the singular, if the other thief silently assented, or did not dissent from the reproaches. But it is too much to concede that Matthew includes both in the plural as reviling, at the very moment when one never did revile, but reproved the reviler and prayed to Jesus. The only way of fair reconciliation is to hold Matthew and Luke as narrating different moments of the action of the malefactors. To suppose that one of them relented after the approach of supernatural darkness, brings the fact into correspondence with other proofs of a subsidence of hostile feeling at that point.

50. *Cried again with a loud voice*—The words are given by John: "It is finished!" They mean, that the atonement is wrought. The great work of penal suffering is done The last pang is suffered, and his soul shall never sorrow again. The body must, indeed, rest in the *grave;* but the spirit will be in *paradise*, and glory eternal is won. For the joy that was set before him he had endured the cross, despising the shame, and will henceforth sit down at the right hand of the majesty of God.

§ 142.—Threefold Effects of the Death of Jesus, 51–54.

The temple vail rent in twain, the earthquake, and the resurrection of saints.

When our Lord proclaimed the atonement finished, the stroke of his power smote *three realms;* the realm of *grace*, of *nature*, and of *death*. In the *first*, the temple's vail was rent, indicatively of the departure of the old dispensation and its nullity at the approach of the new. In the *second*, the earth was rent, indicating that the same power would destroy and renew again the face of nature. In the *third*, the dead rose from their open *graves*, indicating that the dominion of the destroyer should be destroyed, and the human race be raised from his power to a complete resurrection.

51. *The vail of the temple*—The interior of the temple was an extended oblong room, divided into two apartments by a large curtain. The front one of these apartments was called the Holy Place; and the further one, concealed by a second curtain or vail, was called the Holy of Holies. Into the Holy of Holies none entered but the high priest; and he but once a year, on the great day of atonement. Vailed in this Holy of Holies, the divine presence was supposed to dwell. When the temple's vail was rent from top to bottom, it was declared in fact that God no longer dwelt there. There was nothing to conceal. It was but an ordinary room, and the vail was but a rent cloth. It was also shown that the separation was removed; and that Judaism and Gentilism were no longer two, but one in a universal Christianity, an irrespective and impartial Gospel. Judaism is now dead. *From the top to the bottom*—The vail or curtain was some sixty feet long; and it was impossible for it to be thus rent

from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 [v]Now when the centurion, and they that were with him,

v Verse 36; Mark 15. 39; Luke 23. 47.

as some have imagined, by the force of the earthquake. *And the earth did quake, and the rocks rent*—Those who maintain that this earthquake was a mere natural coincidence, might as well go farther and say that the resurrection that followed was also in some way natural. It is indeed very unnatural to say that the darkness, the rending of the vail, the earthquake, and the resurrection, were natural. They are plainly all narrated by the evangelist as supernatural attendants of the transactions of the cross.

52. *The graves were opened*—In the East it is often the case that tombs are broken up by the violence of earthquakes; but this was now the intended effect. The graves are often excavations in a rock, with a stone placed against them for a door, which the shock throws from its place. *Many bodies of the saints which slept arose*—Here is the third effect of the Saviour's death. It pierces the domains of death. A few of the blessed saints, who are precious to Christ, are awakened to life as specimens in advance of his resurrection power.

We should put a period after the word *opened*. Then we shall perceive that the bodies of the saints did not rise and come into the city until *after his resurrection*. His death *opened their graves;* his resurrection *raised them from the dead. Bodies*—Observe, it was not the souls or spirits alone of the dead who were recalled from the domains of death. But their bodies were reanimated by the spirit, and returned again to life. *Saints*—Some think they were *saints* lately dead. Otherwise, how should it be known who they were? But this is by no means certain. See note on Matt. xvii, 3. *Slept*—A beautiful figurative term for *death;* used in Scripture, usually in a good sense, of the happy dead.

53. *After his resurrection*—It must be specially noted that these saints appeared only after the resurrection of Christ. The fact that not the slightest allusion is made in any other part of the New Testament to this resurrection, has induced many commentators to think that there is something mythical in these two verses. But let it be remarked that the appearance of these saints to many occurred *in the midst of the passover*, when thousands if not millions were present from various parts of the world; and that the persons to whom they may have appeared were soon dispersed to their various abodes, so as to leave a much less permanent and public account of the transaction than would otherwise have been the case. Hence it is not strange that Matthew alone notices the fact; and that, too, only to show the immediate effects of Christ's death and resurrection. *Holy city*—Jerusalem, so called not from its present wicked character, but from the holy recollections of prophets and holy men in its history. See note on Matt. iv, 5. Hence we think that those who were raised from the dead were saints of the olden times, to whom indeed it was a *holy city. Appeared unto many*—Matthew narrated these facts in Jerusalem, the very city where they are supposed to have taken place; and there were probably those who were able to attest them.

54. *The centurion*—The captain of a hundred men. He was doubtless the commander of the quaternion of soldiers who watched Jesus's death. Pilate departed after having fixed the superscription. The chief priests had left after they had done mocking; perhaps during the supernatural darkness. *And*

watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

55 And many women were there beholding afar off, [w] which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

56 [x] Among which was Mary

w Luke 8. 2, 3.

x Mark 15. 40.

they that were with him—The soldiers under his command. *They feared greatly*—A deep feeling came over them that they were engaged in a great crime against a good, nay, a divine being. Luke adds: "All the people that came down to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned." *This was the Son of God*—No doubt the centurion heard that the prisoner had during his trial laid claim to this title. It is possible that he was present at the trial of Jesus, and heard that announcement by the Jews, that they required his death for making "himself the Son of God." John xix, 7. There was something in this announcement which, as appears from the following verses in John, startled the pagan Pilate, and could very easily impress the memory of Pilate's centurion. The centurion knew that he was executed for claiming to be *Son of God;* he now recognizes that, whatever that title meant, (and probably his conceptions in regard to it were very indefinite,) it was divinely attested by these supernatural phenomena. Jesus was the Son of God because he so claimed, and God has affirmed his claim. And this strikingly harmonizes with the centurion's expression, as reported by Luke: "Certainly this was a righteous man." He was *righteous* in that his claim, for which he was executed, was sustained by God. So then the innocence of Jesus is admitted by Pilate, by Judas, by Peter, by even the soldiers that slay him, and by all but the Jewish hierarchy who brought the charges against him.

§ 142.—The Friends of Jesus, and his Burial, 55–61.

Pilate had early disappeared; the chief priests had been driven off by the darkness and earthquake; the revilers had been put to silence; and even the soldiers having confessed, the cross seems now to have been surrounded by the friends of Jesus, and his faithful followers heave in view. His death seems to have conquered all, and to have won the field to his own side. The voice of hostile triumph is changed to consternation, and words of revilings give place to confessions of his divinity. Amid the display of divine power and displeasure, the alarmed supplicators begin to fear that Elias may appear to the rescue; or that Jesus will come down from the cross, and the wrath of Jehovah be executed upon themselves for his murder. Alas! the fulfilment of that fear, predicted indeed in these convulsions of nature, is *postponed*, not *abolished*. The same multitudes must undergo the woes of Roman cruelty; and the same men must meet him when he has exchanged the cross for the throne, and "look on him whom they have pierced and mourn."

55. *And many women were there*—Relatives, and followers of his doctrines. They stood the ground more firmly than his disciples. Indeed, their weakness was the source of their strength; for, from their sex, they were in less danger than the male followers of the Lord. At a modest distance, now that the worst of the Lord's enemies are gone, they dare appear conspicuous in sight. These women (as we are informed, Mark xv, 41, Luke viii, 2, 3) ministered unto Jesus of their substance while he was in Galilee. They had come now to Jerusalem for the same purpose. Mary the mother of Jesus, who previously stood at the cross, and whom Jesus on the cross committed to the guardianship of John, (John xix, 25–27,) seems now to have departed.

56. *Mary Magdalene*—Mary of the town of Magdala, so called to distinguish

Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

57 [y] When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 And [z] laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a

y Mark 15. 42; Luke 23, 50; John 19. 38.—z Isa. 53. 9.

her from the other Marys. See note on v, 39. The Lord had delivered her from the dominion of several evil spirits, which may have possessed her more as a sad misfortune than from any guilt. The reputation for impurity of life which has been imputed to her is without any proof, and the habit of connecting her name with ideas of unchastity should be disused. *Mary the mother of James and Joses*—She was the sister of the virgin mother, and wife of Cleophas. *James and Joses* were therefore cousins of our Lord. This James was sometimes called James the Less. *The mother of Zebedee's children*—This was Salome of Bethsaida. See note on xx, 20.

The crucifixion was now closed. The beloved Jesus is a corpse, still in the hands of his enemies, and upon the cross. But, by the Jewish law, no dead body must lie unburied after sundown. The three crucified are therefore taken down; and of the two thieves the legs are broken, to secure their certain death. But as the Saviour is found apparently dead they break not his body, but a soldier *pierces his side.* These facts—the actuality of his death—John testifies as seen by his own eyes.

57. *Even*—The old word for evening. *Arimathea*—This was probably Ramathaim Zophim, lying a few miles west of Jerusalem. Joseph was a believer, though a timid one, in Jesus; but at this crisis he dismisses all fear, and goes boldly forward to claim the holy body. As a "noble counsellor," that is probably, a member of the Sanhedrim, his request would have weight with Pilate; and, as a "rich man," he could afford an honourable tomb. Thus, according to prophecy, "they appointed him his grave with the wicked, but he was with the rich man after his death." Isa. liii, 9, Hengstenberg's translation.

58. *Pilate commanded the body to be delivered*—It was customary to allow the bodies of deceased criminals to be disposed of by friends, though sometimes wicked rulers exacted money from the friends for the privilege.

THE MODE OF ENFOLDING THE DEAD IN GRAVE CLOTHES.

59. *A clean linen cloth*—A large square shroud, or sheet. Nicodemus came also, as John (xix, 39) tells us, and brought the liberal amount of a hundred pounds of spices to embalm the sacred body. The sindon, or clean linen winding-sheet, was wrapped several times round him, the spices being placed in the first fold so as to bring them in contact with the body. It is well remarked by Olshausen, that a sacred providence seems to watch over the body of our Lord Christianity does not contemn the corporeal frame in the which the soul resides. Prophecy also had foretold of his body, that not a bone should be broken; and the victims of sacrifice, which typified his body under the old dispensation, must be without bodily blemish.

60. *Own new tomb*—Probably the new-made vault for his own family. Its first service is consecrated to the Lord.

great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 ¶ Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, [a] the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

a Psalm 2. 1, 3; Acts 4. 27, 28.

The sepulchre, John tells us, was in a garden, which probably belonged to Joseph. The interment of our Saviour here was probably a temporary arrangement, provided hastily on account of the approaching Sabbath. But Joseph's love was never called upon for further provision. He had the honour of providing the sleeping abode of his Master. Such an interment, and such a hospitality in this, the rocky bed of his own future repose, Joseph could well afford; for his blessed guest would there repose but two brief nights, and would then awake and fly. And in return, when this world's millennial Sabbath is past, the guest will awake that host from his own repose, that he too may take his undying flight. *Hewn out in the rock*—We must figure to ourselves a large room cut horizontally into the solid rock for a vault. In this room we enter, from the open air, by a large door. On entering you would see small, long cells, or niches, cut into the solid adamantine sides, as depositories of the corpses: or from this first main room you may enter one or several smaller apartments, in whose walls the niches for corpses are cut. A person could enter into the first main vault, and then into either of the small apartments. See note on xxviii, 6. *Rolled a great stone*—The stone probably was flat, and rolled by successive overthrows. *And departed*—Either to Arimathea or to his dwelling-place in Jerusalem.

INTERIOR OF A ROCK SEPULCHRE.

61. *Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting*—After Joseph and all others are gone, they may be seen sitting. Their heads are bowed with grief and their eyes are fixed on the tomb. Until the sun falls and the Sabbath shades are upon them, their motionless forms might be descried drooping, yet fixed, as if statues hewn out from the same rock as the sepulchre they watched.

Saturday, the Sabbath Eve.

§ 143.—TRANSACTIONS THE DAY AFTER THE CRUCIFIXION, 62–66.

62. *The next day*—This began the moment the sun disappeared; it being the eve introducing the Saturday-Sabbath. *The day of the preparation*—As Saturday was the Jewish Sabbath, so Friday, the day of the crucifixion, was the day of *preparation*, that is, *for the Sabbath. The preparation of the Jews* began strictly at three o'clock in the afternoon; but the name *preparation* was popularly applied to the whole day. It is a pal-

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, [b] After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, [c] sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

b Chapter 16. 21; 17. 23; 20. 19; 26. 61; Mark 8. 31; 10. 34; Luke 9. 22; 18. 33; 24. 6 7; John 2. 19.

c Daniel 6. 17.

pable mistake that some commentators have made, that the *watch* was not *set* until the next morning, or after. This would have allowed full time for the commission of the theft of the body. The next day came on at sunset; and the watch of the two Marys had not long ceased when that of the soldiers commenced. *Chief priests and Pharisees*—A part probably of the Sanhedrim.

63. *We remember*—It seems strange that these men should remember a prophecy of our Lord which his own disciples seemed to forget. But the disciples did not forget that our Lord made this prophecy. They were only doubtful as to its true meaning, and so practically allowed it no meaning at all. It required high faith in them to believe that he would rise on the third day; but it required little faith for these men to believe that Jesus had made this prophecy, and that his disciples might try by deception to render it apparently fulfilled. *Deceiver*—Literally, *strolling juggler*.

64. *The last error*—Namely, the triumph of the disciples of Christ in creating a faith in the resurrection. *The first*—The temporary faith produced by Christ's miracles and preaching in the popular mind that he was the Messiah. The Jews talk as if a previous error or mismanagement had allowed Jesus a temporary triumph while living; they fear that a worse oversight may give a permanent triumph to his cause after his death. How much worse has proved that *error* and how much greater the triumph, than they could have imagined!

65. *Ye have a watch*—The imperative construction which the Greek verb would bear, *Have a watch*, is not natural. Yet the indicative mood of the verb possesses essentially the same force as the imperative. The Jews desired that a custodia or guard of Roman soldiers should be placed at their command to watch the body. Pilate gives his consent by reminding them that they have one already; alluding probably to the quaternion who watched the crucifixion. Compare Acts xii, 4 and John xix, 23. The Jews by this measure intended to prevent the existence of any proof of the divinity of Christ, but they furnished in fact, by their precaution, an additional confirmation. Here, as previously, Pilate appears chary of having any thing to do in the transaction, and determined to leave all action and responsibility with them.

66. *Sealing the stone*—A cord was fastened, with sealing-clay at each end, to the sepulchre, being drawn across the door. Upon the clay the seal of Pilate, or of the priests, was stamped. The door could not be opened, therefore, without breaking the seal; which was a crime against the authority of the proprietor of the seal. The guard was to prevent the duplicity of the disciples; the seal was to secure against the collusion of the guard. So in Dan. vi, 17: "A stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords." *A watch*—Probably a guard of four soldiers. Such certainly was the number who watched the crucifixion. John xix, 23

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Easter Sunday.

In this chapter Matthew furnishes a very brief account of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. There were good reasons why this event should be made visible to the disciples of Jesus alone. This seemed, indeed, to diminish the proof of the fact to that particular age, an age very little likely to profit by a more public display. We have nevertheless, in the very form of the narrative itself, a peculiar proof, for all ages, of its own perfect truth.

In comparing the different accounts of the resurrection given by the four evangelists, we find at first view the greatest apparent confusion and contradiction. There is thereby the most perfect proof that the authors were no copyists of each other's account, but perfectly independent narrators.

But as we study them closely, and, like a well trained jurist, sift the evidence of the various witnesses giving the different parts of the same transaction from different points of view and with different purposes, we find that they begin to coincide. Making those assumptions which not only every jurist, but every man of common sense, makes in adjusting various partial narratives, we finally arrive at a clear accordance, for which the only solution is, the truth of the entire details. We thus have that sort of demonstration which arises from the agreement of witnesses who are examined, without warning, out of each other's presence. The proof of truthfulness is rather heightened than diminished by the fact that the statements are reconcilable on two or three different hypotheses, as that fact contradicts still more decisively the charge of agreed fabrication. *The* agreement is seen to be absolutely impossible, without perfect truth at the centre of all their statements. There is plenty of variation but no contradiction.

Among the principles we have a perfect right to assume are the following:

1. Inspiration does not impart omniscience. A man may be stimulated or guarded by inspiration to know certain things, and to tell all he knows, and no more. That he did not know more, is no proof that he was not inspired to *know*, or at lest to *tell*, all he does tell.

2. Where different witnesses give different sides or parts of a complex transaction, it is to be expected that one will say, and perhaps will have seen, more than the other. The omission of one does not contradict the supply of the other. What each supplies is to be held as true, and as the supplement of the other's omissions. Thus one, in the narrative of the resurrection, may mention a *single* angel, and the other *more*. One may mention a single person, as Mary Magdalene; another more, and another still more. The mentioning of the fewer does not deny the additional number.

3. Different narrators may see the same object or person at different moments of the same transaction; one may see the angel standing, another sitting; yet both may state truly of different moments. Both thieves, at first, may have reviled Jesus, and so one evangelist be true; and yet one may have, after the miraculous darkness, confessed him, and so the other account be true.

Matthew and Mark narrate of the resurrection essentially the same points, giving an account of the visit of the women, naming the Marys and Salome, who see first the angel; and afterward on their way, see Jesus himself.

Mark has his account apparently from the same sources, and, although less extended than Matthew, is more minute in what he states.

Luke takes his standpoint with the larger number of women, from some of whom he doubtless derived his account. They see the same angel, who addresses them; while, according to Luke, they also see a second angel standing in silence by.

John mentions of women Mary Magdalen alone. This was because she was the only one who had anything to do with himself in the transaction; or rather, it was because it was through her means that he himself had anything to do with it. If there were other women to his knowledge in the affair, it did not come within his purpose to mention the fact.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN the [a] end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene [b] and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

2 And behold, there [1] was a great earthquake: for [c] the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 [d] His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

a Mark 16. 1; Luke 24. 1; John 20. 1.
b Chap. 27. 56.——1 Or, *had been*.

c See Mark 16. 5; Luke 24. 4; John 20. 12.
d Daniel 10. 6.

§ 145.—THE WOMEN'S FIRST VISIT TO THE SEPULCHRE, 1, 5–8.

1. *In the end of the sabbath*—After the Saturday-Sabbath was past. It closed at sunset. *As it began to dawn*—John says, "when it was yet dark;" Luke says, "very early;" Mark says, "very early...at the rising of the sun." There seems to be here at first sight a contradiction or two as to the precise time. No complotters to fabricate a tale would have allowed such discrepancy, and the narratives are therefore independent.

Now the visit to the sepulchre is a transaction which may have covered hours; extending from the first start from home until they left the sepulchre. Be it then that the Marys started at four o'clock, and after the company gathered proceeded on their way. By some unknown means, (perhaps the delay in the opening of the city gates,) they may not have arrived until the east was reddening with solar rays, and the sunrise may without difficulty be supposed to have shed its first beams upon them at the sepulchre. Yet it may be easily shown that the phrase *rising of the sun* may indicate not merely the time when the sun has visibly risen above the horizon, but the time when he is sensibly about rising to it.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary—The other Mary was sister to the virgin Mother. Both were left by the evangelists at the sepulchre. xxvii, 61. Mark says that Salome (the mother of James and John) was with the Marys. These women came, not expecting the resurrection, but bringing spices for the embalmment. They had no knowledge of the watch or the sealing, but wondered who should roll away the stone. Little dreamed they that the body was embalmed with immortality; or that angel's hands had opened the door of the tomb.

TRANSACTIONS ON THE DAY OF RESURRECTION, BEFORE THE FIRST VISIT AT THE SEPULCHRE, 2–4.

2. *Earthquake*—As there was darkness and earthquake at the death, so there is now earthquake and light at the resurrection. Both were given for the same purpose; namely, to manifest to the *senses* of men the mighty operations that were going on beyond the reach of *sense*. Death, and life, and power are secret and unseen principles; their manifestations are shown forth to mankind through the senses. The earthquake and the resurrection of course took place previous to the arrival of the women. *Angels*—The angel came not to awaken the corpse. That was done by the return of Jesus from his visitation to the spirit-world. No eye beheld his reviving body, warmed and loosened by the embraces of the soul *Rolled back the stone*—Not that Jesus could not have burst the barrier; but the ministry of angels was necessary to give form to the transaction to human conception. *Sat upon it*—Upon the conquered thing as upon a triumphal throne.

3. *His countenance*—Rather, his whole figure. *Raiment white*—His body was a perfect splendour shining through his investiture.

4. *As dead men*—It is very probable that the splendour of a glorified body is always sufficient to overwhelm the senses and prostrate the strength of a

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, [e] as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, [f] he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

[e] Chapter 12. 40; 16. 21; 17. 23; 20. 19.
[f] Chapter 26. 32; Mark 16. 7.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 ¶ And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, [g] Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell [h] my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

[g] See Mark 16. 9; John 20. 14. —[h] John 20. 17; Rom. 8. 29; Heb. 2. 11.

living mortal. Such was the effect of the transfiguration upon the disciples. See also Dan. viii, 27; Rev. i, 17. These men were not, therefore, eye-witnesses of the resurrection.

5. *Angel. . . unto the women*—By comparing Mark, we find that the angel who *sat upon the stone* to appal and stupefy the guards, had entered the sepulchre as the women drew nigh, doubtless to prevent their being deterred from approaching. The women entered the sepulchre and *there* the words of the angel were uttered to them. The fact that the women entered the sepulchre and were there addressed by the angel, is implied by Matthew in verse 6. We learn from Mark xvi, 5, that on their first entrance the women saw but one angel and he sitting, at which they were terrified. Luke adds that, a moment after, two angels *stood* before them, (the one being joined by a second, to confirm the truth by two witnesses,) so that the words were uttered standing; the first angel doubtless having risen and being speaker for both. Thus all three evangelists are reconciled in regard to the number and positions of the angels. *Fear not*—His purpose was to shed terror and stupefaction upon the guards, but to speak peace and courage to these mourning friends of Jesus. Luke furnishes further words of the angel, as he supplies the fact that there was another angel standing with him.

6. *Come, see the place where the Lord lay*—Pointing doubtless to the particular cell in the wall of the tomb. This implies, in accordance with Mark, that the angel was in the tomb. The *place* was doubtless a cell or niche, usually cut horizontally in the perpendicular wall, so as to insert the corpse, with the head entering first and feet toward the court. Sometimes a shelf or bench was cut along the wall so as to allow the corpse to lie parallel to the wall and entirely visible. As Mary Magdalene saw two angels, "one at the head and the other at the feet" of Jesus, (John xx, 12,) this must have been the method in which Jesus lay.

7. *Goeth before you into Galilee*—According to his promise, in xxvi, 32. Jesus did meet the disciples there according to appointment, and gave them their great commission. But meantime he sustained their faith, above his promise, by several previous appearances unto them.

8. *With fear*—For in spite of the consoling words of the angel, the sense of an angel's presence filled them with tremor. *Great joy*—In spite of the tremor, a joy at the thought that the Saviour had risen, thrilled their hearts and frames.

§ 148.—Second Appearance of Jesus, 9, 10.

9. *Jesus met them*—According to John, Mary Magdalene left the company of women and brought John and Peter to the sepulchre, and then *she* saw the

11 ¶ Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

Lord. But this appearance to the women must apparently have taken place before she could have performed such a walk and returned, and therefore must have been the *first of all.* But if these women saw Jesus *first*, how says Mark (xvi, 9) that Mary Magdalene saw the Lord first? See note on that passage.

THE WATCH REPORT, AND ARE BRIBED TO FALSEHOOD, 11–15.

11. *The watch*—We suppose the quaternion or guard of four soldiers. While the women departed to inform the disciples, they departed to inform the Jews of the disappearance of the body. They bear no report to Pilate, for fear of punishment. They resort for aid and safety to those in whose behalf they have been serving. *Chief priests*—Annas and Caiaphas. *All the things that were done*—How great must have been the consternation of these men to find that after all the matter was not to die with the crucifixion; and that "the last error," which they had feared as "worse than the first," had truly taken place.

12. *Assembled with the elders*—This was no doubt an informal meeting, not of the full Sanhedrim, but of the special enemies of Jesus. *Gave large money*—That is, amply sufficient to secure their fidelity. This might not require so very much, for it is plain that their security from punishment for remissness depended on the success of the Jews in keeping Pilate uninformed or propitiated.

13. *Disciples...stole him away*—It has been strangely doubted, even by Olshausen, whether this narrative of the setting the watch and their bribery by the Jews is truly authentic, because he could not conceive that the Jewish Sanhedrim could be so lost to honour as thus plainly to propose a shameful falsehood. But it is not so clear that they deemed it to be a falsehood. It was a rationalistic solution of the strange phenomenon. Whether the soldiers admitted it or not, the Sanhedrim might claim to believe this as truth, and only bribe the men to assent to this version of the story. *While we slept*—The testimony of sleeping men to the fact of the disciples' participation in the matter was of course not very valid evidence. They earned their money in fathering so poor and so self-criminating a falsehood.

14. *If this come to the governor's ears*—As Pilate would soon return to Cesarea it was not likely to come to his ears. *Persuade*—Appease.

15. *This saying*—This solution of the disappearance of the body. *Commonly reported*—Diffused among the Jewish nation. It is still held by many modern so-called rationalists. *Until this day*—Until the time that Matthew wrote, which was probably some eight years after the fact. Meanwhile the apostles had been constantly preaching the fact at Jerusalem from the day of its occurrence, and they had no doubt encountered this solution at every turn.

APPEARANCE OF CHRIST TO THE DISCIPLES IN GALILEE, 16–20.

Matthew, omitting all the other accounts of the appearance of Jesus after the resurrection, hastens to the fulfilment of the Lord's promise to go before them into Galilee. There the Saviour, in the plenitude of his power in his new kingdom, gives them authority as apostles to spread his kingdom through the world.

16 ¶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain [1] where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 ¶ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, [k] All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 [1] Go ye therefore, and [m 2] teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

[i] Chap. 26. 32; verse 7.—[k] Dan. 7. 13, 14; chap. 11. 27; 16. 28; Luke 1. 32; 10. 22; John 3. 35; 5. 22; 13. 3; 17. 2; Acts 2. 36; Romans 14. 9; 1 Cor. 15. 27; Eph. 1. 10, 21; Phil. 2. 9, 10; Hebrews 1. 2; 2. 8; 1 Peter 3. 22; Rev. 17. 14. [l] Mark 16. 15.—[m] Isaiah 52. 10; Luke 24. 47; Acts 2. 38, 39; Romans 10. 18; Col. 1. 23.—[2] Or, *disciple all nations.*

16. *The eleven*—One alone, the "son of perdition," is not among them. He has fallen like a star from heaven, and left his place vacant.

17. *And when they saw him*—At the first and more distant perception of his person. *They worshipped him*—That is, some of them recognized him with faith, and worshipped him as their Lord. *Some doubted*—They distrusted whether it was really he until a nearer approach.

18. *And Jesus came and spake*—And as he came and spake in the fulness of his power, all shadow of doubt disappeared from every mind.

18. *All power is given unto me*—His death had finished the old dispensation. It had brought in the new. Thereby the *kingdom of God had come with power.* Jesus, returning from paradise, came in the glory of his kingdom. All power is given unto him. Eleven disciples had not tasted death until they had seen him come in his kingdom, endowed with "all power." See note on Matt. xvi, 28. This was the *completion* of the *First Coming*, or *Advent.* The second will be his *Advent to judge the world.* See on Matt. x, 23, and xvi, 27. But the coming seen in vision by Daniel (chapter vii) is not his coming to our world. It is a scenic picture of his endowment with "*all power*" by his Father in heaven. His ascension put him in complete possession of that kingdom; or, rather, this his coming as seen by his apostles, and that his coming as seen in vision by Daniel, are different glimpses of the same great *coming.* Of that coming the part seen by the apostles is rather at or after his resurrection, when he came from *hades* and the grave to the world. That seen by Daniel is rather the completing part at his ascension to the presence and right hand of God. As Paul says: "He raised him from the dead, and set him...far above all principality," etc. Ephes. i, 20, 21 "He became obedient unto death.. wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name," etc. Phil. ii, 8, 9. "Peter standing up with the eleven...said... Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts ii, 14, 36. "To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." Romans xiv, 9. "He hath raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," etc. Eph. i, 19, 20. Of this last passage, Dan. vii, 13, is a visionary, pictorial, prophetic representation. These and other texts prove that Christ's resurrection and ascension were a full *coming* in his kingdom.

It seems to me the plain doctrine of Scripture, that at the death of Christ his *kingdom came with power*, and by his resurrection, *he came in his kingdom.* xvi, 28.

19. *Go ye therefore*—*Therefore*, that is, *because* all power is given unto me. Being, as I am now, the fountain of all authority; crowned, as I now am, with a rightful dominion, go forth and win it to a willing subjection by grace. *All*

20 [n]Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

n Acts 2. 42.

nations—Both organically and individually. *Teach*—Literally, *Disciple* them. And he shows how: First, by *baptizing* them into the faith, and then *teaching*. Of course, if they are at responsible age, they must become willing subjects of a true conversion. And a true baptism cannot take place unless the subject be a justified person, either by faith, or, as an infant, without faith. As infants are a large part of all nations, they are to be *discipled* by baptism, and subsequent teaching as soon as susceptible of it.

Upon this we may remark, 1. That our Lord here adds baptism to the Lord's Supper as permanent institutes of the Christian Church. He is commissioning his apostles to preach among all nations. He is confirming them in their duty to that effect by a promise that shows that he is commissioning to the *end of the world*. To the end of the world their commission includes baptism. 2. Baptism, being the first part of the process of discipling, is the proper initiating rite into the Christian Church. It is to circumcision what the Lord's Supper is to the passover—the substitution of a milder rite to answer the same purpose. 3. As baptism and the Lord's Supper are obligatory institutions in the Christian Church, binding upon every individual Christian, so it is the obligation of every Christian to be a member of the visible Church of God. There are those who imagine that they can be good Christians just as well without the Church as in. Such persons are probably self-deceived. They imagine to themselves a religion which does not intend to obey the plain commands of Christ. So far as they are concerned, the ordinances of Christ would perish. The death of Christ would never be commemorated. A piety of so loose a kind is never likely to save the soul.

In regard to the inclusion of *all nations*, we may remark that it includes the idea that all nations, and *every creature*, as another evangelist expresses it, shall be *discipled*, baptized, and taught. As Christ is a universal Saviour, so his Gospel is framed to be a universal Gospel, and his religion a universal religion. It knows no distinction of race, clime, or colour. It belongs to man, and holds that humanity is a unit; and claiming to be a blessing for all, and to possess a right over all, it designs to spread that blessing and assert that right.

20. *Lo, I am with you*—That is, with the ministry he commissions. From which we infer three things: 1. That there is an order of men commissioned by Christ to continue, by some sort of succession, to the end of the world. 2. We have a test by which the Church and the world can estimate a true ministry. Christ is with them. If Christ be not with them they are not in the true succession, however well signed their ministerial diploma or well traced their ordination pedigree. Ordaining hands cannot convey by a mechanical or muscular conductor the presence of Christ. To test whether the presence of Christ be with them, our Saviour gives a new rule: "By their fruits ye shall know them." A wicked minister can never, therefore, be in Christ's true succession. 3. We have a blessed promise for the truly commissioned minister. Christ's presence is with him! And for a holy ministry collectively, whose duty is to convert the world, Christ's presence is with them in the length and breadth of that great enterprise.

Unto the end of the world—The word here is αἰών and not κόσμος. The latter signifies the world more properly as a material fabric; the former refers more to the *living* world. It is often equivalent to age, or dispensation. It here signifies the present human system, the living world. It is equivalent, then, in duration, to the sacramental promise: "Ye do show forth the Lord's death until he come." 1 Cor. xi, 26.

Note to Matt. viii, 2, page 107.

That Matthew places the healing of the leper in its true chronological position appears probable from the following considerations: 1. Mark's account does not assign it any place or date. Luke gives no chronological sign, but says (and this is the only reason for questioning Matthew's chronology) it was "when he was in a certain city;" or more literally, *When he was in one of their cities.* But by Matthew's account Jesus was on his way from the Mount to Capernaum, which was *one of their cities.* He may have arrived at the precincts of that city before the leper could acquire courage to come forth and state his case, and the miracle be performed in the presence of the multitudes. 2. The words of Matthew imply the immediate succession of the three points, namely, that Jesus came down; that the multitudes followed him toward Capernaum; and that the leper came from the crowds. 3. It seems not only most appropriate, but most natural, and apparently the writer's intention, to view the miracle as a confirmation of the sermon; and therefore occurring immediately after it.

Note to Matt. x, 28, page 185.

"The valley of the son of Hinnom,' (Josh. xv, 8,) so called from some unknown person in very early times, running east and west, intersects the Kedron at the southeast corner of the city. At this place the idolatrous Israelites "burnt their children in the fire" (Jer. vii, 31) unto Moloch, a deity represented by a brass image with the face of a bull. The drum (toph) which was used to drown the cry of the victim gave the place the name of Tophet, (Jer. xix, 6.) The deep "gorge" of Gehenna (as its Greek name is written) is described by Prof. Hackett as "almost terrific." "A wall of frowning rocks and precipices hangs over us on the left, and the southern extremity of Zion rises so steeply on the right that one must almost look up into the zenith in order to scale the top of it with the eye. . . . I found myself oppressed, at length, with a feeling so desolate and horror-stricken, that it was a relief to get through with my task, and come forth where I could see and hear again the sights and sounds of a living world." The name of this ancient gloomy yet fiery recess was fitly used to designate hell.

MARK THE EVANGELIST.

JOHN, surnamed MARK, (by the addition, according to custom, of a Gentile to a Jewish name,) was son of Mary, a pious woman at Jerusalem, at whose house the first Christians sometimes assembled. He was converted to the Christian faith by St. Peter. He was nephew to Barnabas. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their visit to the Gentiles, (Acts xii, 25:) but he left them at Pamphylia and returned to Jerusalem. On account of this retreat St. Paul thought not good to take him on the next journey, which caused a variance between him and Mark's uncle, Barnabas. They separated, and Barnabas took Mark with him to Cyprus. Mark recovered the confidence of Paul and was his fellow-prisoner at Rome. He was also with St. Peter at Babylon. (1 Pet. v, 13.) Tradition says he preached the Gospel in Egypt, and the Coptic or Egyptian Church at this day claims him as its founder. He remained at Egypt, and died, it is said, in the eighth year of Nero, A. D. 61 or 62.

Mark's Gospel is brief, but is not a mere abridgement of either of the other Gospels. It omits much, but what it relates is sometimes given more fully than by any other evangelist. His frequent explanations of Jewish phrases show that he wrote for Gentiles. It is said that he wrote by dictation of St. Peter. But Mark writes with the minuteness, freshness, and circumstantial ease of an independent eye-witness.

Mark being a resident at Jerusalem, at the house of his Christian mother, during our Saviour's life, probably had opportunity for a full acquaintance with all the facts of our Saviour's history. I am of the decided opinion that he was himself the young man described by himself (xiv, 51) as following Jesus, and narrowly escaping apprehension, as his friend, by the soldiery. (Acts xii, 12; Col. iv, 10; Acts xii, 25; xiii, 5-13; xv, 37-39; Phil. 24; 2 Tim. iv, 11; 1 Pet. v, 13.)

THE

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK.

CHAPTER 1.

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, [a] the Son of God;

2 As it is written in the prophets, [b] behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 [c] The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 [d] John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance [1] for the remission of sins.

a Matthew 14. 33; Luke 1. 35; John 1. 34: Heb. 1. 1, 2.——*b* Malachi 3. 1; Matt. 11. 10; Luke 7. 27.

c Isa. 40. 3; Matt. 3. 3; Luke 3. 4; John 1. 15, 23.
d Matt. 3. 1; Luke 3. 3; John 3. 23.——1 Or, *unto.*

CHAPTER I.

§ 15.—MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, 1–8.

1. *The beginning of the gospel*—This phrase is equivalent to the liturgical phrase, "Here beginneth" the Gospel of Jesus. And hence it forms a sort of title to the book; or, at least, is a formula used to indicate that the complete work from the beginning, and not a fragment, is in hand.

Jesus—Mark not only commences in the very midst of the Gospel events, but introduces the names of Jesus and of John as familiar to his readers. The impression produced is, that he undertakes to make a record and memorial of facts known in the general to his immediate readers. *Son of God*—Though Mark gives no account of the miraculous birth of Jesus, which is so largely furnished by Matthew, yet the very title *Son of God* implies that he knew and recognized the truth of that great fact. From this and many more such instances, we infer that each evangelist selects for his Gospel a comparatively small number of facts from the abundance of his knowledge. The omission of a fact by an evangelist does not prove his unacquaintance with it.

Mark omits the account of the birth of John the Baptist; of the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus; of the Magi; of the shepherds, the murder of the infants, and the flight into Egypt; together with all account of the pedigree, parentage, and childhood of Jesus. He gives few discourses of Jesus, and states no doctrine of himself. What he does give is a brief and rapid narration of the actions and official life of our Saviour.

2. *As it is written*—The second and third verses, by a strong inversion, should come after the fourth: "John did baptize ... as it is written," etc The prophecy is quoted from Isaiah xl, 3, and Malachi iii, 1. As we have explained in the corresponding passage in Matthew, the quotation is a prophecy concerning John, the harbinger of the Messiah Jesus. *I send my messenger*—This *I* in the prophet is spoken by Jehovah. But this Jehovah is the Messiah. So that we have here a true Jehovah-Jesus.

4. *Baptism of repentance*—Not the baptism of faith in a Redeemer already crucified and atoning; but a baptism of repentance and reformation preparatory to his coming. *For the remission of sins*—This phrase depends on *repent*

5 [e] And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was [f] clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat [g] locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, [h] There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 [i] I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you [k] with the Holy Ghost.

9 ¶ [l] And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 [m] And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens [2] opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

11 And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, [n] Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

12 [o] And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; [p] and the angels ministered unto him.

14 ¶ [q] Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, [r] preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, [s] The time is fulfilled, and [t] the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

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e Matt. 3. 5.—*f* Matt. 3. 4.—*g* Lev. 11. 22. *h* Matt. 3. 11; John 1. 27; Acts 13. 25.—*i* Acts 1. 5; 11. 16; 19. 4.—*k* Isa. 44. 3; Joel 2. 28; Acts 2. 4; 10. 45; 11. 15, 16; 1 Cor. 12. 13.—*l* Matt. 3. 13; Luke 3. 21.—*m* Matt. 3. 16; John 1. 32.

2 Or, *cloven*, or, *rent*.—*n* Psalm 2. 7; Matt. 3. 17; chapter 9. 7.—*o* Matt. 4. 1; Luke 4. 1. *p* Matt. 4. 11.—*q* Matt. 4. 12.—*r* Matt. 4. 23. *s* Daniel 9. 25; Galatians 4. 4; Ephesians 1. 10 *t* Matt. 3. 2; 4. 17.

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ance. It is not *baptism for the remission of sins*, but *repentance* for such *remission.*

7. *The latchet*—The word *latchet* signifies a *fastener* of some kind. It is allied to the *latch* of a door, to the word *lock;* and is derived from the Latin *ligo*, to *fasten.* It here signifies a *shoe-string.* In Matthew the phrase is, "whose shoes I am not worthy to bear." Perhaps John, on different occasions, used both expressions.

§ 16.—Baptism of Jesus, 9–11.

9. *In those days*—The days in which John was baptizing.

10. *Like a dove*—At the creation the Spirit of God moved (in the Hebrew *brooded*) on the face of the waters. Gen. i 2. On which passage of Genesis Rabbi Ephraim (as quoted by Townsend) says the "Spirit brooded *like a dove*, which flies over its nest."

§ 17.—The Temptation of Jesus, 12–13.

12. *Driveth him into the wilderness*—The Spirit *impelled* him to go where inclination would not have induced him. Matthew says, the Spirit "led" him. He was impelled by the divine impulse; he was 'led" by the divine guidance.

13. *Forty days tempted*—This by no means affirms that the temptation lasted during the whole forty days, any more than the ministry of angels mentioned in the last clause. *Satan...wild beasts ...the angels*—Three very different sorts of company. Diabolical and brutal natures were present to witness or subdue the divine· but, on the other hand,

16 [u]Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway [x]they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 [y]And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 ¶ [z]And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 [a]And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 [b]And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let *us* alone; [c]what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know

u Matt. 4. 18; Luke 5. 4.—*x* Matt. 19. 27; Luke 5. 11.—*y* Matt. 4. 21.

z Matt. 4. 13; Luke 4. 31.—*a* Matt. 7. 28. *b* Luke 4. 33.—*c* Matt. 8. 29.

the *divine* and angelic combined with the human were too mighty for them.

§ 23.—Retirement into Galilee, 14.
§ 24.—Ministry in Galilee, 14–15.
§ 26.—Call of four Disciples, 16–20.

19. *Mending their nets*—Why does Mark mention that they were *mending their nets*, while he mentions that Peter and Andrew were casting theirs into the sea? This casual expression would be wholly unexplained if we had not an account from another evangelist, namely, Luke, who tells us that the miracle of the immense draught of fishes had been performed, by which the nets of both boats had been broken. This slight clause, thus inserted for no apparent purpose, is one of those undesigned coincidences which show that truth is at the bottom of both narratives. It suggests that the evangelist Mark is aware of more facts than it is consistent with his brevity of purpose to narrate. See note on ver. 1. It also suggests that, had we a fifth evangelist, many of the difficulties which now embarrass us in the Gospels would entirely disappear. Meanwhile these slight variations show that there is no combination between the narrators, but that all are reporting the same facts.

§ 27.—Demoniac healed at Capernaum, 21–28.

21. *Went into Capernaum*—From the sea where the miraculous draught of fishes took place. *Straightway on the Sabbath day*—This was not, therefore, on the same day with the miraculous draught of fishes, for these men would probably not have been engaged in fishing on the Sabbath day. *Straightway* implies perhaps that it was on the immediately next Sabbath.

22. *As one that had authority*—See Matthew vii, 29; Luke iv, 32.

24. *Let us alone*—The original word is perhaps a mere interjection, *Ea!* Yet probably this interjection is derived from the Greek verb signifying *let alone*. *What have we to do with thee*—What business have we with each other?

Art thou come to destroy us?—So the Gergesene demoniacs say, "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Matt. viii, 29. From which we infer that the demons live in fearful anticipation of the day when they shall be *destroyed* by being subjected to tor-

thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus [d] rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit [e] had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

29 [f] And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's [g] wife's mother

d Verse 34.—*e* Chapter 9. 20.

f Matt. 8. 14; Luke 4. 38.—*g* 1 Cor. 9. 5.

ment which they do not now endure. The time is coming when they shall be cast into the bottomless pit. Rev. xx, 10. And they are now reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day. *I know thee who thou art*—So also in Matt. viii, 29, the two demons recognise him in his divine and adjudging character. So in Acts xvi, 16–18, the girl possessed with the spirit of Python or Apollo proclaims the apostles to be the servants of the Most High. The apostle, like the Saviour, repudiated the testimony of such witnesses, for reasons perhaps apparent from our note on the next verse. See note on chap. v, 2.

25. *Hold thy peace*—Jesus was careful to guard himself and his own cause from every token of sympathy with the infernal beings, and so drew a most palpable line of hostility between them and himself. This he did probably to prevent all colouring for the Jews to say that there was collusion between him and them; or that he cast out devils through diabolical confederacy and power. Yet our Lord did not veil himself from their perception, nor prevent their expressing their first recognition of him; knowing their language concerning him would be of such a character as to indicate that they feared and dreaded him as their worst enemy.

26. *Had torn him*—Rather, had convulsed him. Luke says he left the man without doing him any permanent injury. *Cried with a loud voice*—In this respect he hardly disobeyed the command to hold his peace; for he did not speak any more or utter any further testimony to the divinity of Jesus. But with a cry of despair, rage, and fear, he surrenders his place and departs.

27. *What new doctrine*—A new set of facts was coming to light; a new power was being disclosed. Men's ideas must open to the new views and new doctrines as soon as a being has appeared on earth superior to and in antagonism with the powers of darkness. Indeed, it is important to remark that, striking as was the testimony rendered to the heavenly mission of Jesus, from the fact that his miracles were in opposition to the ills of men, to their diseases, their sorrows, and deaths, including the whole ruin that sin produces, *there was needed this miracle of casting out devils* from their dominion over men, to place the opposition between him and the powers of hell in the clearest view. He is the friend of man; an opponent of sin, death, and hell. Hence it seems, in fact, that it was this very miracle of casting out devils that his enemies subsequently felt themselves most called upon to explain by perverting.

28. *Spread...throughout...Galilee*—The phrase, *region round about Galilee*, would be more correctly rendered, *the surrounding region of Galilee*. Our Lord did not leave Galilee, but took a circuit

lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 ¶ [1] And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and [j] suffered not the devils [3] to speak, because they knew him.

35 ¶ And [k] in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon and they that were with him followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All *men* seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, [l] Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for [m] therefore came I forth.

h James 5. 14, 15.——*i* Matt. 8. 16; Luke 4. 40.
j Chap. 3. 12; Luke 4. 41; See Acts 16. 17, 18.

3 Or, *to say that they knew him.*——*k* Luke 4. 42.
l Luke 4. 43.——*m* Isa. 61. 1; John 16. 28; 17. 4.

in it. It went *abroad* that a beneficent being had appeared, at whose touch and voice disease and damage and leprosy and demons disappeared.

The followers of the Saviour were even for centuries called by the Pagans Galileans. The philosopher Epictetus, who lived after the time of the Emperor Nero, asked if a philosopher can become indifferent to suffering, like the Galileans, meaning thereby the Christians. And the Emperor Julian, surnamed the Apostate, in the third century, who was cut off in the midst of his efforts to destroy Christianity, cried with his dying voice, addressing Christ, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!"

§ 28.—Healing of Peter's Wife's Mother, and many others, 29–39. (29–33. See notes on Matt. viii, 14, 17. 34–39. See notes on Matt. iv, 23–25.)

34. *Suffered not the devils to speak*—See notes on verse 25. Some good critics render this clause, "suffered not the devils to say that they knew him." His peremptory and stern dealing with these malignant beings was to show his abhorrence of their malignant nature. Moreover, he thereby taught us at this day not to found our faith on pretended spiritualistic manifestations from unknown supernatural sources or sorceries. If we trust in that class of deceptions we are liable to be betrayed by them into damnable falsehood and delusion.

35. *And in the morning*—The day after the Sabbath he retired from the crowds to find a place of prayer. It was as if to recruit his spiritual strength, that had been expended upon such a number of miracles, preachings, and debates, by communion with God.

37. *All men seek for thee*—The crowds of yesterday had returned, all seeking the wonderful benefactor. But there was growing up a dangerous popularity. The miracles which he had performed in order to work a quiet spiritual effect upon the people, and, like the dew, prepare them for the full reception of the seed of truth, were in danger of producing too secular and general an excitement. From man he first turns to God in prayer; and then from man overfed with privileges, he departs to those who are perhaps hungering amid a famine of the word.

38. *Towns*—The Greek word here designates places larger than villages, but unwalled, and less than ordinary cities.

39 [n] And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 ¶ [o] And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with [p] compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, [q] immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things [r] which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 [s] But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: [t] and they came to him from every quarter.

CHAPTER II.

AND again [a] he entered into Capernaum after *some* days, and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway [b] many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

n Matt. 4. 23; Luke 4. 44.—*o* Matt. 8. 2; Luke 5. 42.—*p* Hebrews 2. 17; 4. 15.—*q* Psalm 33. 9; Matt. 15. 28.—*r* Lev. 14. 3, 4, 10; Luke 5. 14.

s Luke 5. 15.—*t* Chap. 2. 13.—*a* Matt. 9. 1; Luke 5. 18.—*b* Proverbs 8. 34; Matt. 13. 20 Luke 5. 17; Acts 17. 11.

39. *He preached in their synagogues*—From which it appears that their synagogues were scattered through the villages of Galilee, as churches are among us.

§ 29.—Healing of a Leper, 40–45. (See notes on Matt. viii, 2–8.)

45. *To blaze abroad*—This shows the full wisdom of Jesus in forbidding him to tell any man. The rumour raised a tumult and a crowd and an excitement wholly unlike the gentle and spiritual movement it was the purpose of Jesus to create. *Could no more openly enter*—The tumult was getting too great for the good of the people, or for the quiet of government. Our Lord and the crowd were in danger of attracting the suspicious notice of the authorities. *From every quarter*—Even his sacred retirement was haunted with their visits

CHAPTER II.

§ 30.—Curing of the Palsied Man, 1–12. (See notes on Matt. ix, 2–8.)

1. *Again he entered into Capernaum*—After leaving Capernaum, as mentioned in the last chapter, on account of the crowds.

2. *Many were gathered together*—Luke informs us that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law from every town in Galilee, Judea, and from Jerusalem. It is not probable that they came so far for the purpose of hearing him, but there may have been some convocation which drew them to that locality, and the fame of Jesus drew them to hear him. *Not so much as about the door*—So great was the crowd that access could not be obtained to the door. This might intimate that the paralytic was taken up through a neighbour's house to the roof over Jesus. *The word*—The Gospel word or doctrine.

3 ¶ And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and [c]reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? [d]who can forgive sins but God only?

8 And immediately, [e]when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 [f]Whether is it easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the [g]Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way unto thine house.

12 And immediately he arose took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 ¶ [h]And he went forth again by the sea side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

14 [i]And as he passed by, he saw Levi the *son* of Alpheus sitting [l]at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

15 ¶ [k]And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with pub-

c Matt. 16. 7; Luke 5. 21, 22.—*d* Job 14. 4; Isa. 43. 25; Dan. 9. 9.—*e* Matt. 9. 4.—*f* Matt. 9. 5.
g Daniel 7. 13, 14; Acts 5. 31; 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16.

h Matthew 9. 5.—*i* Matthew 9. 9; Luke 5. 27
1 Or, *at the place where the custom was received.*—*k* Matthew 9. 10.

3. *Borne of four*—Each holding him by a limb. Or more probably, each holding a corner of the litter.

8. *Perceived in his spirit*—Not by the Divine Spirit, but by his own spirit in a supernatural clearness.

§ 31.—MATTHEW CALLED, 13–14. (See comment on Matt. ix, 9.)

14. *Levi the son of Alpheus*—We learn from the parallel passage in Matthew that this Levi was Matthew himself. If the Alpheus here mentioned was the same Alpheus as in Matt. x, 3, then Matthew was the cousin of Jesus, being brother of James the Less.

§ 52.—LEVI'S FEAST; DISCOURSE OF JESUS, 15–22.

This narrative of the feast given by Levi is furnished here, previous to its proper time, to connect it with his call. The account is different in points that show independence, yet the essential agreement is very complete.

15. *His house*—Matthew's house. See our Life of Matthew, prefacing his Gospel.

licans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, [1] How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, [m] They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

18 [n] And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast: and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, [o] Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be [p] taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of [2] new cloth on an old garment; else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old [q] bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

23 ¶ [r] And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, [s] to pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read [t] what David did, when he had need, and was ahungered, he, and they that were with him?

26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the showbread, [u] which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

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l Isa. 65. 5; Luke 15. 2; Heb. 12. 3.——*m* Matt. 9. 12, 13; 18. 11; Luke 5. 31, 32; 19. 10; 1 Timothy 1. 15.——*n* Matt. 9. 14; Luke 5. 33.——*o* Gen. 29. 22; Judges 14. 10, 11.——*p* Zech. 13. 7; Matt. 26. 31; John 7. 33, 34; 12. 8; 13. 33; 16. 7, 28.——2 Or, *raw* or, *unwrought*.——*q* Job 32. 19.——*r* Matt. 12 1; Luke 6. 1.——*s* Deut. 23. 25.——*t* 1 Sam. 21. 6 *u* Exod. 29. 32, 33; Leviticus 24. 9.

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§ 33.—PLUCKING EARS OF CORN, 23–28. (See notes on Matt. xii, 1–8.)

26. *In the days of Abiathar the high priest*—It appears by the account of the transaction here referred to in 1 Sam. xxi, 1, that Ahimelech, father of Abiathar, was the high priest who supplied David the showbread. His son Abiathar was then priest, and afterward high priest; and as such under David attained a celebrity in Jewish history. Jesus, therefore, specifies the time as being the period of Abiathar's life and office, who afterward became high priest. It is by no means improbable, though there is no other proof than arises from this passage, that Abiathar may have been high priest with his father, as he was high priest a part of his life conjointly with Zadock. There would be no extraordinary error, however, in saying that the American Constitution was formed in the time of President Washington.

27 And he said unto them, [v]The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

28 Therefore [w]the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

CHAPTER III.

AND [a]he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And [b]they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, [c]Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with an-

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v Exod. 23. 12; Deut. 5. 14; 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. w Matt. 12. 3. —a Matt. 12. 9; Luke 6. 6.

b Psalm 37. 32; Isaiah 29. 20, 21; Jeremiah 20. 10; Daniel 6. 4. — c Hosea 6. 6.

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27. *Made for man*—Man was first created, and then the Sabbath was given to subserve his highest good—physical, social, spiritual, intellectual, and eternal. That mode of keeping the Sabbath which most conduces to this intention is the true mode.

How beneficent is the Sabbath under this construction of its obligations! It is one of the best of God's gifts to man. He who would destroy its enjoyment is therein the enemy of his race.

How profound and comprehensive is the maxim which our Lord utters in regard to the relations of the Sabbath to man! It is full of the benevolent wisdom of his Gospel.

And if the Sabbath be made for man it is not made for the Jew alone. It is founded on the necessities of the race, and must be intended for the race. If it be made for man, it is not made for one age or for one generation or one dispensation alone, but for all ages and dispensations of men. Hence the Sabbath is perpetual. Whether it be on the same day of the week or not, is comparatively, in this view, unimportant. That the week is perpetuated under the Christian dispensation may be shown from Rev. i, 10, where the "Lord's day" is a weekly institution. That the Sabbath of the week is continued appears from the same consideration.

CHAPTER III.

§ 34.—The Withered Hand, 1–6. (See notes on Matt. xii, 9–14.)

1. *Which had a withered hand*—In which the natural moisture had become lost, and the strength of the sinews had departed.

2. *Watched him*—Kept their eye fixed upon him to detect something which they might construe to an evil meaning. It is thus that some minds place themselves when they come to view religion. They scan it, not to know the true will of God, and their duty in his sight, but to see if some ground of perversion cannot be found.

3. *Stand forth*—As Jesus is watched by them, he will show them that he intends no concealment and no dark juggle.

4. *To do good*—As I now purpose to do to this man. *Or to do evil*—As you purpose to do to me. He intended to *save life*, nay, restore life to the withered hand. They sought to destroy life. He was on the side of goodness and mercy; they on the side of malice and murder. But our Lord's purpose is to show them that they, with their laborious schemes of malice, are truly the Sabbath breakers. *They held their peace*—The silence of self-condemnation.

5. *Looked round about on them with anger*—Before proceeding to the performance of the miracle he makes a full pause

ger, being grieved for the [1]hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

6 [d]And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with [e]the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, [2]and from Judea,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on

1 Or, *blindness.*—*d* Matt. 12. 14.

e Matt. 22. 16.—*f* Luke 6. 17.

as they stand in a silent circle before him. They are fixed in the obdurate silence of hatred. For one moment the Saviour is a Judge. There is one glance of that eye which in the final day will rive his adversaries. Some have wondered that the Lord should be *angry*. But justice has its rightful wrath for guilt. Right is terribly hostile to wrong. God is angry with the wicked every day. All government as it sits upon the judgment seat has this true wrathful anger. Our Lord looked full upon these malicious beings as they stood using their powers in the cause of evil and consecrating themselves to the eternal service of the devil, and he felt that they were sinners deserving of God's just judgment. *Grieved*—And so the pure and Holy Spirit of God may be grieved, vexed, made angry, and caused to depart. Sorrow and pity for their wilfulness and their ruin mingles with the stern recognition that they deserve the ruin they incur. *Hardness of their hearts*—A determination to allow no proof to convince and no good to soften them.

Stretch forth thine hand—The bodily healings performed by our Lord were ever a symbol of the cures he works as great physician on the fountain malady in the soul—sin. Depraved man is withered in every limb of his soul; impotent by fallen nature. Yet just as this man is commanded to put forth his strengthless hand, so is the strengthless soul commanded to put forth a powerful act. How? Because the grace that gives the command therewith supplies the underlying power "to will and to do." Yet as the man was not made either to will or do the act, as the performance though empowered was not secured, but left to free agency, so does the grace of God simply enable the act, but not absolutely secure its performance.

Whole as the other—Both hands testified to the reality of the miracle. But the reality of the miracle is not denied. In the very charge that it is done by diabolical power it is admitted to be done.

§ 34.—Jesus and the Multitudes at the Sea of Tiberias, 7–12. (See notes on Matt. xii, 15–21.

6. *Straightway*—The Greek word for *straightway* is a great favourite with Mark. It is used by him (translated variously) eight times in the first chapter, and thirty-nine times in the other fifteen chapters. *Herodians*—See notice on Matt. xii, 14.

8. *Idumea*—This was the ancient Edom. It lay south of Palestine. Herod the Great was by descent an Idumean. Many Jews lived in the country, but it can hardly be inferred that these who now followed Jesus had heard of him and came from that distance. Jews from Idumea being in Galilee followed the Saviour on account of his great and merciful miracles.

9. *A small ship*—A fishing boat. The Lake of Gennesaret was too small for what is called a ship. *Should wait on him*—To be in readiness to receive him. This keeping a boat in readiness

him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they [2]pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 [g]And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, [h]Thou art the Son of God.

12 And [i]he straightly charged them that they should not make him known.

13 ¶ [j]And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him,

2 Or, *rushed*.—*g* Chap. 1. 23. 24; Luke 4. 41. *h* Matt. 14. 33; chap. 1. 1.—*i* Matt. 12. 16; chap. 1. 25, 34.—*j* Matt. 10. 1; Luke 6. 12; 9. 1.

and that he might send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils:

16 And Simon [k]he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them [1]Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the [3]Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went [4]into a house.

k John 1. 42.—*l* Isaiah 58. 1; Jeremiah 23. 9; Hebrews 3. 12.—3 Gr. Kananites, that is, *Zealot*, as in Luke 6. 15.—4 Or, *home*.

enabled Jesus to let out upon the lake in case the pressure was too great, but it does not appear that the boat was really used There seems to be no immediate connection with the ship mentioned in chapter iv, 1. *Should throng him*—Should press upon him inconveniently with their crowds. So they did on a former occasion, so as to drive him into the desert. Chap. i, 45.

10. *Plagues*—Diseases recognized by the evangelist as the result of sin. Such is, in truth, the source of all disease.

11. *Thou art the Son of God*—See notes on chap. i, 24–26. Our Lord accepted not devils for preachers. They so mingled falsehood with their truth that he who listens to them for the truth's sake will be led away by their lies. All the testimony Jesus would have from them was given by their disclosing their infernal presence and disappearing at his command.

§ 35.—Jesus withdraws to a Mountain; the Twelve chosen, 13–19. (See notes on Matt. x, 2–4.)

13. *Calleth...whom he would*—From the multitude before him at the mount he names and selects which he pleases. He chose them, not they him. Yet he chose with discerning power, knowing their character and state of heart. *They came unto him*—He named those who became his twelve, and from the crowd each one stepped forth.

14. *And he ordained twelve*—It appears by Luke vi, 12–19, that the regular selection of the twelve from the number of his disciples was made, and their ordination performed, just before his pronunciation of his sermon on the mount.

Several were called previous to that. Matt. xxviii, 19–20. Their full qualification they received at the day of Pentecost. Acts ii.

The list of the Apostles, 16–19 Compare Matt. x, 2–4, Luke i, 14–17.

16. *Surnamed Peter*—Meaning rock. Mark seems to name the apostles very much in couples. See notes on Matt. x, 2–4.

19. *And they went into a house*—This clause properly belongs to the next verse, and opens the next paragraph. It is to this house that "the multitude cometh together."

20 ¶ And the multitude cometh together again, [m]so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when his [5]friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: [n]for they said, He is beside himself.

22 ¶ And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, [o]He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 [p]And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24 And if a kingdom be [q]divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And [r]if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 [s]No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28 [t]Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because [u]they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

m Chap. 6. 31.——5 Or, *kinsmen.*——*n* John 7. 5; 10. 20.——*o* Matthew 9. 34; 10. 25; 12. 24; Luke 11. 15; John 7. 20; 8. 48, 52; 10. 20. *p* Matthew 12. 25.——*q* Judges 12. 1; 2 Samuel 20. 1, 6.——*r* Genesis 13. 7, 8; 37. 4; Galatians 5. 15.——*s* Isaiah 49. 24; Matthew 12. 29.——*t* Matthew 12. 31; Luke 12. 10; Hebrews 10. 28; 1 John 5. 16.——*u* John 10. 20.

§ 42.—Healing a Demoniac; Scribes and Pharisees blaspheme, 19–30. (See notes on Matt. ix, 33, and xii, 32–37.)

20. *Could not so much as eat bread*—How much our Lord was at this time oppressed by the crowds may be seen by comparing, among other passages, chapter i, 45, and verses 7–9 of this chapter. Indeed, no evangelist conveys to us so strong a view of the immense excitemont produced in Galilee by the preaching of Jesus in his early ministry as Mark.

21. *When his friends*—At Nazareth, where the reports of these miracles were in keeping with the depraved character of the place and the subject. Probably they had heard of the charge of his being a demoniac. *Heard of it*—Heard that immense crowds were following his preaching the wonders he did. *They went out*—From their homes, to rescue him from the danger that might result from the excitement he was producing. *Beside himself*—They doubtless meant this as an excuse for what they held to be the dangerous course of our Lord. He does not know what he is about in thus exposing himself to the danger of being held the author of public commotion. For the people were, as we learn by Matt. xii, 23, beginning to call to mind that he was the Son of David, and there was just fear of an insurrection. Verses 22–30. Compare notes on Matt. xii, 24–32. Whitby, however, prefers to render the words, "He is fainty," or exhausted; that is, by the presence of the multitudes.

22. *Scribes which came down from Jerusalem*—Of course these great scribes from Jerusalem would be very wise, and be able to state the case with perfect learning!

24. *That kingdom cannot stand*—And hence Satan would be too wise to endanger his own kingdom by entering into confederacy with me, who am driving his demons from among men.

31 ¶ [v]There came then his brethren and his mother, and standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, [w]Who is my mother, or my brethren?

34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

35 For whosoever shall [x]do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

CHAPTER IV.

AND [a]he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables, [b]and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on [c]stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns,

v Matt. 12. 46; Luke 8. 19.—*w* 2 Corinthians 5. 16.—*x* Matt. 7. 21; John 7. 17; James 1. 25; 1 John 2. 17.—*a* Matthew 13. 1; Luke 8. 4. *b* Chap. 12. 28.—*c* Ezekiel 12. 19; 36. 26.

§ 45.—JESUS' MOTHER AND BRETHREN; WHO HIS RELATIVES, 31–35. (See notes on Matt. 12, 38–45.)

31. *There came then his brethren and his mother*—Fulfilling the purpose they expressed in verse 21. But when they arrived from Nazareth they found him so surrounded as to be unable to get access to him. That the brothers of Jesus disbelieved in him was clearly a fact. But there is no proof that his mother ever doubted his miraculous conception or his divinity. At the first miracle in Cana of Galilee, her faith is impatient for the demonstration of his power, which she truly expected.

32. *Seek for thee*—As we learn by Matt. xiii, 54, that he soon visited Nazareth, it is very probable that the object of this visit was to prevail on him to come to the home of his childhood. He did indeed visit Nazareth, but with a very different effect from what they might have expected. The Nazarenes challenged him to do the same miracles over which he had done in Capernaum; but such were the conditions of the challenge that he repelled and rejected it. Compare notes on Matt. xii, 46–50.

CHAPTER IV.

§ 49.—PARABLES, 1–35. (See notes on Matt. xiii.)

1. *Sat in the sea*—That is, he sat in the boat, and the boat was in the sea. Here our Lord delivered the great series of parabolic discourses of which a sketch is given in Matthew xiii.

2. *In his doctrine*—That is, in his teaching.

3. *Behold, there went out a sower to sow*—The Greek has the article *the; the sower.* The sower of the seed is the preacher, and the original sower is the Lord himself. Our Lord had, no doubt, during his preaching in Galilee, plentiful experience of the various classes of hearers he describes in this parable

and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, [d] and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 [e] And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto [f] them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

12 [g] That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 ¶ [h] The sower soweth the word.

d John 15. 5; Col. 1. 6.—*e* Matt. 13. 10; Luke 8. 9. &c.—*f* 1 Cor. 5. 12; Col. 4. 5; 1 Thess. 4. 12; 1 Tim. 3. 7.—*g* Isa. 6. 9; Matt. 13. 14; Luke 8. 10; Jno. 12. 40; Acts 28. 26; Rom. 11. 8.—*h* Matt. 13. 19.

11. *Them that are without*—The division between the *within* and the *without* was a very customary one with ancient philosophers. Those *within* were the people who listened and received their philosophy and became learned; those *without* were the common mass of men, who remained in unphilosophical ignorance. From the Greek words which designate this difference were derived the English words *exoteric* and *esoteric*. The exoteric, or *those without*, in Christianity, are not those who are incapable of learning—for the Gospel is not, like a philosophy, abstruse and difficult—but they are those who refuse to be wise when the Gospel, simple enough for a child, proposes to make them wiser than philosophy can make them.

12. *That*—Many learned men understand this *that* to mean *so that*. Others interpret it *in order that*. The former meaning indicates that parables were here used *so that* the effects described in this verse do really follow, but not with the divine intention that they should follow. The latter indicates that parables are used with the intention and purpose that such results should follow. Now the latter is the more ordinary sense, though not the necessary one, of the Greek word here rendered *that*. It here indicates that parables were used for the purpose that men who chose might remain blind. Not that their blindness is a primary purpose of the Almighty; but that blindness which is their choice may be accorded to them. These negative verbs *not perceive* and *not understand*, express intentional unintelligence. These men do not fall into passive ignorance, but they actively ignore. *Lest*—This *lest* depends upon this ignoring. They ignore *lest* they should be converted. Obdurate sinners are sometimes afraid they will be converted. They fear that the truth will become so clearly truth that they cannot stand, and will in the trying moment yield to it. To prevent the evil use they would make of his truth Jesus wraps it in parables, and so accommodates their wish to his truth in order to avoid conversion. *And their sins should be forgiven them*—Silly are these men who are so afraid of conversion. For what is the worst that would happen if they should be converted? Simply this: their sins would be *forgiven*, and they would be *healed*.

13. *All parables*—Of which this is the first, and in a great degree the key.

15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, [l] and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.

21 ¶ [j] And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a [1]bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22 [k] For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23 [l] If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear. [m] With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more be given.

25 [n] For he that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

26 ¶ And he said, [o] So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

i Chap. 10. 24; 1 Timothy 6. 9, 17.——*j* Matthew 5. 15; Luke 8. 16; 11. 33.——1 Gr. *modius*. See Matthew 5. 15.——*k* Matthew 10. 26; Luke 12. 2.

l Matthew 11; 15; verse 9.——*m* Matthew 7. 2; Luke 6. 38.——*n* Matthew 13. 12; 25. 29; Luke 8. 18; 19. 26.——*o* Matthew 13. 24.

15. *Satan cometh*—Through his emissaries, symbolized by *the fowls*. Temptations have wings, and they come in flocks, and they have open beaks to snatch up the word of life and carry it off or *devour it up*. And how easily the seed of the word does go! People on Monday have forgotten both the sermon and the text of Sunday. The birds have come and devoured them both up.

24. *Shall be measured to you*—In proportion to our earnest listening to the word, and listening with the heart, does God *measure* out our profit. Much is said nowadays about good preaching, and it is doubtless important. But far more important is good listening. The poorest Gospel preaching, well listened to, is better than eloquence merely enjoyed as a pleasant song that dies with the last sweet note.

26–29. Mark here gives a beautiful simile of our Lord, which is furnished by no other evangelist. It compares the growth of the word in the heart to the growth of the seed to full maturity and fruit.

27. *Should sleep, and rise night and day*—That is, who *sleep, night*, and *rise day*. *He knoweth not how*—He knows what must be done by him in order

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is [2] brought forth, immediately [p] he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 ¶ And he said, [q] Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 *It is* like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 [r] And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*.

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

35 [s] And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we [t] perish?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, [u] Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

CHAPTER V.

AND [a] they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 Or, *ripe*.—*p* Revelation 14. 15.—*q* Matthew 13. 31; Luke 13. 18; Acts 2. 41; 4. 4; 5. 4 13. 20.—*r* Matthew 13. 34; John 16. 12.

s Matthew 8. 18, 23; Luke 8. 22.—*t* Jonah 1. 6 *u* Psalm 46. 1, 3; Isaiah 43. 2.—*a* Matthew 8. 28; Luke 8. 26.

that the process may take place, but the process itself is a secret to him. The plants grow while he sleeps. But if he were awake, nature nevertheless works in secret before his eyes.

CHAPTER V.

§ 51.—Two Demoniacs of Gadara, 1–20.

1. *Came over unto the other side*—Landed upon the eastern shore of Gennesaret.

Country of the Gadarenes—The evangelist does not say that the miracle of the demoniacs and the swine took place at Gadara; but in the country or region of that city. Gadara, the city, was situated southeasterly from the lake, about eight miles distant, and the Jermuk river intervened. The name of Gergesa (in whose *country* Matthew locates the miracle) appears also as Gerasa, and is identified by Dr. Thomson with Kersa

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

situated on the eastern shore. See map, p. 62. Dr. Thomson remarks.

"In studying the details of the miracle I was obliged to modify one opinion or impression which had grown up with me from childhood. *There is no bold cliff overhanging the lake* on the eastern side, nor, indeed, on any other, except just north of Tiberias. Everywhere along the northeastern and eastern shores a smooth beach declines gently down to the water. Take your stand a little south of this Chersa. A great herd of swine, we will suppose, is feeding on this mountain that towers above it. They are seized with a sudden panic, rush madly down the almost perpendicular declivity, those behind tumbling over and thrusting forward those before, and as there is neither time nor space to recover on the narrow shelf between the base and the lake, they are crowded headlong into the water, and perish.

2. *With an unclean spirit*—As this is one of the most unequivocal instances of supernatural possession, it may be properly prefaced by some remarks on this class of phenomena as presented in the New Testament.

1. No one is said to be possessed by Satan, or *the* devil; but, in the original, by *demons* or *unclean spirits*, or spirits connected with *specific diseases*, as a *deaf* or *dumb* spirit. The whole system of Bible demonology presupposes one arch enemy of God and man, finite yet powerful, an archangel of evil, who is the mightiest finite representative of wickedness revealed to us in the universe. See note on Matt. iv, 1. He makes his appearance in Eden under the base guise of a serpent, and procures the fall of man. As Belial he is known in Old Testament history, and perhaps as Azazel. He is Satan in the book of Job. He is Satan, Beelzebub, and prince of evils in the New Testament.

2. Out of the range of the Scripture lands the powers of evil widely and powerfully ruled. Yet it may have been under other names and wearing other guises. The same world of invisible evil powers in its great outlines is dimly disclosed; but the demoniac agencies appear in different specific modes and styles, as the customs and institutes of men admitted them. There were the oracles, revealing apparently more or less of hidden truth, and with their devotees more or less inspired and phrensied. And it is by this very oracular inspiration that the girl in Acts xvi, 16, was said to be filled, namely, by the spirit of PYTHON, which was the name of the god of the oracles. And this maiden exhibited the same peculiar phenomenon as these demoniacs, in showing a supernatural knowledge of the true character of the apostles, proclaiming them to be the servants of the Most High, while she herself only professed to belong to a far inferior opposing power. It is a striking fact, (which we shall again notice,) that the fathers of the Christian Church boasted that the oracles became dumb after the coming of Christ. This brings us also to another striking conclusion of the Church, namely, that the demons of the New Testament, the devils of Scripture, lurked under the guise of much of the mythology of heathendom. And on that view of the case we are at no loss to find an abundance of phenomena in pagan antiquity analogous to the *possessions* in the New Testament.

3. To those who maintain that the cases of supposed possession were nothing more than ordinary diseases, it is fairly replied that the New Testament writers, and, evidently, the Jews of that age, generally and fully distinguished between diseases produced by natural causes and the same diseases attended with demoniacal symptoms. All phenomena of the diseases exhibited by the possessed manifest themselves in abundance in that country at the present day. Thus Dr. Thomson says: "In Sidon there are cases of epileptic fits which, in external manifestations, closely resemble that mentioned in Mark ix, 18, Matt. xvii, 15, and Luke

3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and

ix, 38. These fits have seized a young man in my own house repeatedly; and lo! the spirit taketh him, and he suddenly *crieth* out, and *foameth* at the mouth, and gnasheth with his *teeth*, and is cast down wherever he may be seized, and pineth away until you would think he was actually dead. Matthew calls him a lunatic; but according to Mark it was a dumb spirit."

And yet over and above these diseases, which were natural, there are, in the cases of the possessed, phenomena which show that, in their case, either the disease is preternaturally produced or aggravated, or attended with evidence of demoniac action in addition. Such is most strikingly the case of the demoniac of Gadara, whose case is now before us. It is impossible to account for his strange consciousness of a wonderful power in Jesus, (see note on i, 24;) or for the utterance of language which comes, as it were, from a being within the man; or for the language on the part of our Lord clearly recognizing the fact of possession; or for the departure of the devils out of the man into the swine by the express permission of Jesus, on any other hypothesis than the existence of beings superinduced upon men.

4. It is asked, Why do not demoniacs appear at the present day? and to this we reply: The most profound observers in mental and psychological science have remarked that certain supernaturalisms seem to affect the human system in particular ages, then disappear, and are the subjects of scepticism in a later era. Phenomena of this kind took place in the middle ages which are unknown now. We have elsewhere remarked (note on Matt. i, 20) that the coming of our Lord was attended by a series of splendid manifestations of the heavenly world; that the powers of hell should come forth in counteraction is not wonderful That the battle between supernal and infernal powers then took place on earth more or less manifestly, is plain from the whole scene of the Saviour's temptation. That victory was on the side of heaven was boasted, as we have before remarked, by the Church in regard to the dumbness of the oracles. The fatal blow was struck to paganism, and the decay of diabolical influence commenced, which is yet to result in the binding of Satan and the casting him down to the abyss, the triumph of the martyr spirits reigning in heaven and over earth with Christ. Rev. xx. Yet still there are cases, especially of men given over to delirium tremens, which exhibit a terrible approximation to possession, and which, if Satanic power were at the present time in the manifest ascendant, would very possibly develop a clear possession by the power of the evil ones. Dr. Trench quotes cases where a double consciousness has shown itself, and we have known cases take strangely a supernatural tendency. How much diabolical mingles with the so-called *spiritism* of the present day, may be matter of serious consideration. That these phenomena, many of them, may belong to the human organism in a preternatural condition, is probable. But they may belong to that part of the human which is allied to the supernatural; and no one can perhaps draw the line which divides them from the supernatural, or tell when the supernatural is superinduced upon the preternatural in man. This much we are certain: these phenomena belong not to the divine, but to th *lower* if not to the *infernal* order of invisible powers. As there is day and night, light and darkness, good and evil, so there is a kingdom of heaven and a kingdom of hell. Let men beware how they join themselves to the power of darkness, and come under the dominion of Beelzebub, prince of devils.

3. *Dwelling among the tombs*—Mark is very copious in his description of the fierceness of this demoniac. We may

the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, [b] What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, [c] that thou torment me not.

8 For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.

9 And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many.

[b] Acts 16. 17; James 2. 19.

[c] 2 Peter 2. 4; Jude 6.

remark that these feats of strength and fondness for horrible resorts are often manifested by madmen. The tombs and charnels of the Jews were large, and filled with the uncleanness of dead men's bones. In this wild region, around the eastern and less civilized side of Tiberias, many gloomy recesses were to be found.

6. *Saw Jesus... ran*—A traveller not far from this region describes a similar scene near Lebanon: "The silence of night was now broken by fierce yells and howlings, which I discovered proceeded from a naked maniac, who was fighting with some wild dogs for a bone. The moment he perceived me he left his canine comrades, and, bounding along with rapid strides, seized my horse's bridle, and almost forced him backward over the cliff."—*Warburton's 'Crescent and the Cross.'*

Worshipped him—The spirit recognized with a supernatural discernment our Lord's superior nature, and did him a reverence.

7. *Torment me not*—In Matthew they cry: "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" From this we seem able to derive some inferences as to the laws under which these demons were, and which produce manifestations over and above the symptoms of mere disease. 1. The organs of the man are so completely *possessed* by the demon that the latter speaks through them, and thus he communicates with other beings in the body here on earth. 2. There is apparently a desire on the part of these unhappy spirits to come into such possession and into communion with the human scene of things, as if they were thus less miserable than when without. 3. These infernal beings dread to be driven back to their own infernal abode. They are there to be chained down in darkness, and in dread of the day of judgment yet to come. Jude 6; 2 Peter ii, 4. Hence they fear that Jesus will anticipate that day, and "torment them before the time." Matt. viii, 29.

8. *For he said*—That is, our Lord *had* said so. The demon's cry of terror of coming torment was in consequence of the Lord's previous order to depart out of the man. *Unclean spirit*—Some spirits may be specially spiteful, and some unclean or sensual.

9. *Asked... What is thy name?*—Christ asked the man (not the demon) his name, in order to call out his personal consciousness, and aid in restoring him to himself. *My name is Legion*—The demon snatches the man's organs and answers the question for himself, giving his own name. He is a host by nature and by name. A Legion in the Roman army was a division embracing six thousand men. The demon, perhaps, assumes that name for this whole number, as being their leader. That Legion is a name for a commander of a legion among the Jews, appears from the Talmudical writings. It is not indeed to be supposed that either angels or devils wear in the invisible world the names that men give to their visible manifestations; and hence the same dark personality may enact the oracular

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of [d] swine feeding.

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus [e] gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the

d Deut. 14. 8; Isa. 65. 4; 66. 3.——*e* Job 1. 12; 2. 6.

Python or Apollo among the Greeks, the Belial, perhaps, among the Hebrews, and the Beelzebub among the Canaanites.

10. *He besought him*—The demon besought the Lord. He knows his master. It is a demon's prayer. And it is heard! But he utters no petition to have his diabolical nature changed. He only asks a boon suited to his demoniac nature. Luke (viii, 31) says: "They besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep;" that is, the abyss, or "bottomless pit." Rev. xx, 3.

Not send them...out of the country—Our Lord only assumed to expel the devils from their abode in the particular human being. He did not shape their subsequent course, or mark out their path. And Stier well argues with those who impute immorality to Jesus for giving this permission, that it is even less liable to the imputation of immorality than the divine permission, not withheld from demons, to possess men; or, we may add, the divine permission yielded to evil men to rule in the world. That a Mohammed, a Nero, or a Napoleon should rule mankind with bloodshed, is the mystery of God.

12. *Send us into the swine*—From this we should infer, 1. That the infernals preferred a human residence to a bestial one; but they preferred a bestial one to their own infernal home. 2. That it may be, at certain periods of the world, possible for the infernal natures to possess a brute body, especially of such unclean brutes as are congenial with their own uncleanness.

13. *Gave them leave*—That is, as before said, after dismissing them from the man, he did not hold any control over their course. If they were able, like their fellow devils, to make any other lodgment, that was not our Lord's present business. They had full *leave*, for aught he had to do. At any rate, better they should possess a beast than a man. We say this, because many have accused our Lord of doing a harm by *sending* them into the swine, and so destroying life and property. Our Lord drove them from the man, and that is all he had to do with them. For their own subsequent course of mischief they alone were chargeable, as truly as Judas or the Pharisees who blasphemed the Holy Ghost.

Ran violently down—Devil upon brute! The ferment of the two combining natures produces madness. The swine ran into the sea and the devils went to their own place. This may have been the best way of driving him out of the human world to hell. And that is a second full answer to those who cavil, falsely as well as foolishly, that our Lord here destroyed the swine-herd's property. Surely our Lord is not responsible for the doings of the devils he expels from men.

legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid.

16 And [f] they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

17 And [g] they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, [h] he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

21 [i] And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him; and he was nigh unto the sea.

22 [k] And behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

f Job 13. 11; Psa. 14. 5; 2 Tim. 1. 7.—*g* Matt. 8. 34; Acts 16. 39.—*h* Luke 8. 38.

i Matthew 9. 1; Luke 8. 41.—*k* Matthew 9. 18; Luke 8. 41.

15. *In his right mind*—A grateful monument of mercy! The frenzy has subsided, the victim is redeemed, his body is clothed, his troubled soul is once more tranquil. And there is his benefactor soon to be banished the country!

16. *Also concerning the swine*—Our Lord had saved the man; the devils had destroyed the swine. The Gadarenes are thankless for the mercy, and hold our Lord responsible for the loss of the swine.

17. *They...pray him to depart*—They considered the salvation of the man as a poor compensation for the loss of their pigs. A man who drives away devils must be himself driven away. So do men hug the disease and hate the physician. Skeptics at the present day agree with the Gadarenes and repudiate Jesus, because the demons destroyed the swine. *They began to pray*—We have here three prayers from three very different sources. The devils pray, and their prayers are granted, but to their own final discomfiture. The Gadarenes pray, and their prayer too is granted; for the Lord departs and leaves them to their own abandonment. The delivered man prays to be with Christ; his prayer is not heard, but a better lot is assigned, a lot of home duty, which if he will fulfil, he shall be with his Lord forever.

18. *Prayed him that he might be with him*—How different is the grateful man from his former furious self!

19. *Go home...tell*—This time our Lord does not forbid his miracle to be proclaimed abroad. There is a very plain reason. In other cases the publication of the miracles subjected our Lord to be overwhelmed by a throng, (see on Matt. viii, 4.) But here he was about to leave the country. Besides, an evil report was liable to be spread by the losers of the swine. For this reason he desired the man not to go with himself, but to remain and proclaim his miracle of mercy at his own home. So that home shall be doubly blessed, with the restoration of its own lord, and with a reception of new mercy from God. Very touching is the poor man's gratitude. He would *be* forever *with* his benefactor.

§ 52.—Crossing the sea previous to Levi's feast, 21.

§ 52.—Raising of Jairus's Daughter and Healing the Issue, 22–43.

22. *Jairus by name*—The raising of Jairus's daughter is in each of the three evangelists closely connected with the healing of the diseased woman.

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

24 And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 And a certain woman, [l] which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And [m] had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing [n] bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and [o] touched his garment.

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And [p] straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that [q] virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and [r] told him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, [s] thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 [t] While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further?

l Leviticus 15. 25; Matthew 9. 20.—*m* Job 13 4; Jeremiah 8. 22; 30. 12, 13.—*n* Psalm 108. 12.—*o* 2 Kings 13. 21.

p Exod. 15. 26; Psalm 30. 2; 103. 3.—*q* Luke 6. 19; 8. 46.—*r* Psalm 66. 16.—*s* Matthew 9. 22; chapter 10. 52; Acts 14. 9.—*t* Luke 8. 49.

23. *Point of death*—Adding perhaps, as Matthew reports him, "is even now dead," so hopeless was the case.

25. *A certain woman*—She intercepts him as he passes on, followed by a pressing crowd, to the house of Jairus.

27. *Touched his garment*—She seemed to consider his body entirely charged with healing power like electricity. If she can but touch his garment she can draw it out.

30. *Virtue*—Power. This is a remarkable expression. It seems to imply that faith would draw the healing power from Jesus almost without his volition! How unlike the unbelief of his own countrymen, which compelled the "virtue" to stay within him, so that he could scarce do a miracle among them. But in both cases the operation was really *through* the consent of his will.

31. *Who touched me?*—The judge who asks the prisoner whether he is guilty or not guilty, really knows, perhaps, but he will none the less put him to the answer. The Lord knew who, but he must make her reveal herself.

33. *Told him all the truth*—For the Saviour held that she would not be truly blessed unless she should with her mouth before the world confess her salvation. Then could he wisely speak her *peace*.

35. *Daughter is dead*—And so, they thought, beyond the *Master's* power.

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, [t]only believe.

37 And [u]he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the [v]tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not [w]dead, but [x]sleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn. [y]But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And [z]he charged them straightly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

CHAPTER VI.

AND [a]he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, [b]From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, [c]the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they [d]were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, [e]A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and

t 2 Chronicles 20. 20; Romans 4. 18, 24. *u* Luke 8. 51; Acts 9. 40.—*v* Jeremiah 9. 17, 20; Acts 9. 39.—*w* Acts 20. 10.—*x* John 11. 11. *y* Acts 9. 40.—*z* Matthew 8. 4; 9. 30; 12. 16; 17. 9; chapter 3. 12; Luke 5. 14.—*a* Matthew 13. 54; Luke 4. 16.—*b* John 6. 42.—*c* See Matthew 12. 46; Galatians 1. 19.—*d* Matthew 11. 6. *e* Matthew 13. 57; John 4. 44.

36. *Believe*—Trust even beyond the gates of death.

37. *No man to follow him*—Amid the chosen twelve there was a lesser chosen number. This was an occasion of deep solemnity, and our Lord allowed but three disciples present.

39. *Sleepeth*—See on John 11: 11.

41. *Talitha cumi*—This is in the Syro-Chaldaic language, which our Lord usually spoke. Mark alone gives the express words as a memorable reminiscence.

43. *Given her to eat*—So that when natural or spiritual life is restored, (Mr. Wesley well remarks,) even by immediate miracle, all proper means are to be used to preserve it.

CHAPTER VI.

§ 55.—Jesus's Second Visit to Nazareth, and Rejection there, 1–6. (See notes on Matt. xiii, 54–58.)

§§ 57, 59.—Sending out his Apostles, 7–13. (Compare notes on Matt. x.)

among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 [f]And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

6 And [g]he marvelled because of their unbelief. [h]And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 ¶ [i]And he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in *their* purse:

9 But [k]*be* shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 [l]And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 [m]And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, [n]shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom [1]and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13 And they cast out many devils, [o]and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

14 [p]And king Herod heard *of him;* (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That

f See Genesis 19. 22; 32. 25; Matthew 13. 58; chapter 9. 23.——*g* Isaiah 59. 16.——*h* Matthew 9. 35; Luke 13. 22.——*i* Matthew 10. 1; chapter 3. 13, 14; Luke 9. 1.——*k* Acts 12. 8.

l Matthew 10. 11; Luke 9. 4; 10. 7, 8.——*m* Matt. 10. 14, 15; Luke 10. 10-12.——*n* Acts 13. 51; 18. 6. 1 Gr. *or.*——*o* James 5. 14.——*p* Matthew 14. 1 Luke 9. 7.

8. *A staff only*—The caution in Matthew against *two staves*, is part of the prohibition against extra provision. Some have ridiculed this mode of reconciliation, as if contradictions in Scripture might be allowed in such minutiæ They might as well say that it was ridiculous for our Lord to allow one coat and forbid two.

9. *Be shod with sandals*—They were to take no *shoes*, as being a special and more costly provision, but wear their ordinary sandals.

10. *There abide*—As Luke more fully expresses it: "Go not from house to house." On this Dr. Thomson remarks:

"The reason is very obvious to one acquainted with Oriental customs. When a stranger arrives in a village or an encampment, the neighbours, one after another, must invite him to eat with them. There is a strict etiquette about it, involving much ostentation and hypocrisy, and a failure in the due observance of this system of hospitality is violently resented, and often leads to alienations and feuds among neighbours. It also consumes much time, causes unusual distraction of mind, leads to levity, and every way counteracts the success of a spiritual mission."

13. *Anointed with oil many that were sick*—See note on Matt. vi, 17. Oil bore the same symbolic relation to the restoration of health of body and soul in these miracles that water did to spiritual purification of body and soul in baptism. Hence, in James v, 14, the elders in their miraculous cures were to anoint the sick with prayer. The Jews had the custom of anointing the sick with incantations.

§ 61.—Herod hears of Jesus and desires to see him, 14–16. (See notes on Matt. xiv, 1, 2.)

14. *King Herod*—Mark calls Herod *king* here in compliance with popular custom

John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

15 [q] Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 [r] But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, [s] It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had [2] a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20 For Herod [t] feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and [3] observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 [u] And when a convenient day was come, that Herod [v] on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee;

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, [w] Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in [x] straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

26 [y] And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent [4] an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard *of it*, [z] they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 [a] And the apostles gathered

q Matt. 16. 14; chap. 8. 23.—*r* Matt. 14. 2; Luke 3. 19.—*s* Lev. 18. 16; 20. 21.—2 Or, *an inward grudge*.—*t* Matt. 14. 5; 21. 26.—3 Or, *kept him*, or, *saved him*.—*u* Matt. 14. 6.—*v* Gen. 40. 20.

w Esther 5. 3, 6; 7. 2.—*x* Proverbs 1. 16; Romans 3. 15.—*y* Matthew 14. 9.—4 Or, *one of his guard*.—*z* 1 Kings 13. 29, 30; 2 Chronicles 24. 16; Acts 8. 2.—*a* Luke 9. 10.

yet his true title of tetrarch is more accurately given by Matthew and Luke.

§ 60.—Death of John the Baptist, 21-29. (See notes on Matt. xiv, 6–12.)

§ 62.—The Twelve return, 30, 31. (Compare Luke ix, 10.)

See note on Matt. xiv, 13; and the introductory note to Matt. xiv.

themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 [b]And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile: for [c]there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 [d]And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 [e]And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and [f]he began to teach them many things.

35 [g]And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, [h]Shall we go and buy two hundred [5]pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, [i]Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when they had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, [j]and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And [k]they did all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

b Matthew 14. 13.——*c* Chap. 3. 20.——*d* Matthew 14. 13.——*e* Matthew 9. 36; 14. 14.——*f* Luke 9. 11. *g* Matthew 41. 15; Luke 9. 12.——*h* Numbers 11. 13, 22; 2 Kings 4. 43.——5 Gr. *denarion.* See Matthew 18. 28.——*i* Matthew 14. 17; chap. 8. 5; Luke 9. 13; John 6. 5, &c.; See Matthew 15. 34; chap. 8. 5.——*j* 1 Samuel 9. 13; Matthew 26. 26 *k* Deuteronomy 8. 3; 2 Kings 4. 42.

§ 63.—Five Thousand fed, 32–44. (See notes on Matt. xiv, 13–21.)

33. *Outwent them*—That is, the people ran around the northern head of the lake, and outwent Jesus and his disciples so rapidly as to meet him at his landing on the other shore. If Dr. Thomson's topography be right, it is easy to see how this could be done. The course of the boat of Jesus was very much along the coast, and the people from the cities on the north side could easily meet him by rapid movement at the other shore. If the route was directly across the lake it would have been impossible.

41. *Gave...his disciples to set before them*—Here, according to the beautiful thought of Stier, we have the image of a true and holy *tradition.* God gives to his Son, his Son to his apostles, his apostles to the people, the heavenly bread.

45 [l]And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before [6]unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

47 [m]And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48 And he saw them [n]toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and [o]would have passed by them.

49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, [p]Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For [q]they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves; for their [r]heart was hardened.

53 [s]And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come

l Matthew 14. 22-34; John 6. 17-21.—6 Or, *over against Bethsaida.*—*m* Matthew 14. 23; John 6. 16, 17.—*n* Isaiah 54. 11; Jonah 1. 13.

o See Luke 24. 28.—*p* Isaiah 43. 2; John 26 19, 21.—*q* Chapter 8. 17, 18.—*r* Chapter 3. 5 16. 14.—*s* Matthew 14. 34.

45. *Unto Bethsaida* — Bethsaida is situated, according to the latest researches, on the two sides of the Jordan as it falls into the Lake of Gennesaret. The Lord directs them in effect to touch at Bethsaida on their way to Capernaum. From the fact that Bethsaida is spoken of as sometimes being in Galilee and sometimes in Gaulanitis, it has been supposed, upon pure conjecture, that there were two Bethsaidas, as is seen upon our map at the title-page. But it is better to consider the two as being a double Bethsaida on the opposite sides of the Jordan, being counterparts of each other. Thus it appears upon our map at page 62. There would thus be one part in Galilee and one in Gaulanitis. Dr. Thomson thus explains the facts of this eventful night:

"As the evening was coming on, Jesus commanded the disciples to return home to Capernaum, while he sent the people away. They were reluctant to go and leave him alone in that desert place. To quiet their minds, he may have then told them to go on before toward Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd, promising to join them in the night, which he intended to do, and actually did, though in a manner very different from what they expected. In this state of anxiety, they endeavoured to keep near the shore between this and Bethsaida. But a violent wind beat off the boat, so that they were not able to make Bethsaida, nor even Capernaum, but were driven past both; and when near the plain of Gennesaret, at the northwest corner of the lake, Jesus came unto them walking upon the sea. All this is topographically natural."

§ 64. — JESUS WALKS ON THE SEA, 45-56. (See notes on Matt. xiv, 22-36.)

Mark omits all mention of Peter's attempt to walk upon the water.

52. *Their heart was hardened* — A clear passage in which obtuseness or unimpressibility of intellect is called hardness of heart; or at least the dullness of perception is attributed to the moral insensibility.

out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that [t] they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched [7] him were made whole.

CHAPTER VII.

THEN [a] came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with [1] defiled, that is to say, with unwashen hands, they found fault.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands [2] oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of [3] tables.

5 [b] Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

t Matt. 9. 20; chap. 5. 27, 28; Acts 19. 12.—7 Or. *it.*
a Matt. 15. 1.—1 Or, *common.*

2 Or, *diligently;* in the original, *with the fist*
3 Or, *beds.*—*b* Matthew 15. 2.

CHAPTER VII.

§ 66.—DEBATE WITH THE PHARISEES AND SCRIBES IN REGARD TO TRADITIONS, 1–23. (See notes on Matt. xv, 1–20.)

1. *Scribes, which came from Jerusalem*—It does not certainly appear, as Olshausen remarks, whether the scribes from Jerusalem really belong to Jerusalem, or are scribes of the north, just returned from the passover, full of the temper caught at Jerusalem, and ready to raise a dispute.

2. *Unwashen hands*—This was not the matter of cleanliness, but of superstitious purity. The Jews of Palestine at the present day wash, indeed, after the meal, because they have handled meat with their fingers, but they wash not, either for cleanliness or superstition, before the meal. According to the Eastern custom, they sometimes think it polite, as Dr. Thomson remarks, to present to the mouth of their guests a piece of food in fingers too dirty to be agreeable to a European taste.

3. *Wash their hands oft*—Mark writes for Gentiles, and therefore explains Jewish customs at some length. The word here rendered *oft* has received very various interpretations. It properly signifies with the fists or *clenched hand*, and it describes the ceremonial mode of washing one hand with the other.

4. *Except they wash*—That is, except they *baptize*. A different word from the previous word rendered *wash*. So also in this verse the *baptism* of cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables. *Tables*—The Greek word thus translated should be rendered *couches;* meaning the *couches* upon which they used to recline at meals. We cannot suppose these couches were wholly immersed in or under water, a process which would be very likely, if often performed, to be destructive to them. We cannot but believe that these, like the "divers washings" mentioned by Saint Paul in Hebrews ix 10, were sprinklings or affusion.

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, [c]This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit in vain [d]do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye [4]reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, [c]Honour thy father and thy mother; and, [f]Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* [g]Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

12 And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

14 ¶ [h]And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*, and understand:

15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 [i]If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 [j]And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, [k]Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him;

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 [l]For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

c Isa. 29. 13; Matt. 15. 8.—*d* 1 Sam. 12. 21; Mal. 3. 14; Titus 3. 9; James 1. 26.—4 Or, *frustrate.*—*e* Exod. 20. 12; Deut. 5. 16; Matt. 15. 4. *f* Exod. 21. 17; Lev. 20. 9; Prov. 20. 20.

g Matt. 15. 5; 23. 18.—*h* Matt. 15. 10.—*i* Matt. 11. 15.—*j* Matt. 15. 15.—*k* Jeremiah 5. 4, 5 John 3. 10; 1 Cor. 3. 2; Heb. 5. 11.—*l* Gen. 6. 5; 8. 21; Matt. 15. 19.

6. *Esaias prophesied*—Matthew (xv, 6–8) gives these words in a different and more appropriate order. The quotation from the prophet naturally follows as a confirmation of the description which our Lord himself gives to the Pharisees to their face. It may be added that Mark shows himself not the mere copyist of Matthew, from the fact that he does not here, as sometimes, simply add some heightening expressions: but he adds words spoken by Jesus, and with all the divine style of the Great Teacher, which are given by no other evangelist.

17. *Disciples asked*—Through Peter

22. *An evil eye*—An envious eye.

23 All these evil things come from within, and [m]defile the man.

24 ¶ [n]And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a house, and would have no man know *it:* but he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

26 The woman was a [5]Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31 ¶ [o]And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32 And [p]they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and [q]he spit, and touched his tongue;

[m] 1 Cor. 3. 17; Titus 1. 15; Jude 8.——[n] Matt. 15. 21.——5 Or, *Gentile.*

[o] Matt. 15. 29.——[p] Matt. 9. 32; Luke 11. 14.
[q] Chap. 8. 23; John 9. 6.

§ 67.—Healing of the Syrophenician Woman's Daughter, 24–30. (See notes on Matt. xv, 21–28.)

§ 68.—Healing Deafness and Impediment, 31–37.

32. *One that was deaf*—That had become so since his birth and learning to speak. *An impediment in his speech*—A defect of utterance, as some think, which had grown upon him from not hearing his own voice, as is often the case. It was more probably a tongue tie in addition to his deafness, as appears by the description of the cure in verse 35.

33. *Took him aside*—In performing his miracles our Lord used various modes of manifesting his putting forth his divine efficiency, representing to our external *senses* that secret act of power which the *sense* cannot see. Of course some external sign was needed to show to others that the result really proceeded from his will, and that the causation really went out from his person to accomplish the thing. Sometimes he spoke a word directing the thing to take place. Sometimes he put forth his hand. He anointed a blind man's eye with moistened clay, and sent him to Siloam. These variations of methods, all possessing no virtue in themselves, served to show the absoluteness of the dependence upon his simple will.

From a great variety of miracles Mark seems to select this one on account of the number of significant signs used. Our Lord *took him* apart from the rest to signalize him out as the object of miracle; he *put his fingers into his ears* to mark the tympanum that was to be quickened; he *spit* and *touched his tongue* to show that its stiffened muscles must be lubricated into limberness; he *looked up to heaven* to indicate that the source of power was God: he

34 And [r]looking up to heaven, [s]he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 [t]And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And [u]he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it;*

37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, [v]He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN those days [a]the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and saith unto them,

2 I have [b]compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will [c]faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.

4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness?

5 [d]And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and

r Chap. 6. 41; John 11. 41; 17. 1.—*s* John 11. 33, 38.—*t* Isa. 35. 5, 6; Matt. 11. 5.—*u* Chap. 5. 43. *v* Gen. 1. 31.—*a* Matt. 15. 32; Mark 6. 34.

b Psalm 145. 8; Hebrews 2. 17; 4. 15; 5. 2. *c* Isaiah 60. 3, 4; Matthew 9. 36.—*d* Matthew 15. 34. See chapter 6. 38.

spoke the word to mark that the effect was instant in *time* upon the command. Mark details the whole with great minuteness, and the word *Ephphatha* is no doubt the very Syro-Chaldaic word used by our Lord. See on chap. v, 41.

34. *Looking up to heaven*—He thereby declares that it is by no earthly or *demoniac* power that he performs this work, but by his oneness with the Father in heaven. *Sighed*—Either a deep aspiration to God, or a sigh for the woes which it is his mission to compassionate. *Ephphatha*—Here, as in the case of the words "Talitha cumi," which pierced the dead ear of the maiden, Mark preserves the very word in the very language uttered. These words, which were impregnated with a power to pierce the unhearing, he thinks, are memorable words. The tradition of the Church had preserved them to him, and he deems them worthy to be preserved in the true *written* tradition of the Church of all ages. Memorable words they are, reminding us of those dread tones which shall pierce the ears of a slumbering race and wake it to a final resurrection.

35. *The string of his tongue was loosed*—This cannot be well understood in a metaphorical sense, and therefore clearly shows that it was a case of a fettering membrane upon the tongue.

36. *Tell no man*—The palace of Herod at Cesarea Philippi was not distant, and mercy and miracle must in this guilty world work in secret.

37. *He hath done all things well*—There is not, as some commentators seem to think, any intended allusion here to the sanction passed by the Creator upon his own works as being very good. Gen. i, 31. But the present words are none the less a significant echo. For the works of the new creation, like those of the old, are indeed very *good*, and *all things done well. Both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak*—As is shown in the case of the single person now saved.

brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them;* and they did set *them* before the people.

7 And they had a few small fishes: and [e]he blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them.*

8 So they did eat and were filled: [f]and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

10 ¶ And [g]straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 [h]And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

13 And [i]he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

14 ¶ [j]Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 [k]And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and *of* the leaven of Herod.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* [l]because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it,* he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? [m]perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

19 [n]When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

e Matt. 14. 19; chap. 6. 41 —*f* 1 Kings 17. 14, 16; 2 Kings 4. 2, 7.—*g* Matt. 15. 39.—*h* Matt. 12. 38; 16. 1; John 6. 30.—*i* Psalm 81. 12; Jer. 23. 33; Hos. 4. 17; 9. 12.—*j* Matt. 16. 5.—*k* Matt. 16. 6; Luke 12. 1.—*l* Matt. 16. 7.—*m* Chap. 3. 5; 6. 52. *n* Matt. 14. 20; chap. 6. 43; Luke 9. 17; John 6. 13.

CHAPTER VIII.

§ 69.—The Feeding the Four Thousand, 1–9. (See notes on Matt. xv, 32–38.)

8. *Meat*—This word is used in its old English sense and signifies *food.*

10. *Dalmanutha*—The situation of this place is not at the present day known, but commentators have located it on the west side of the lake, near the town of Magdala, mentioned in Matthew xv, 39; and Dr. Thomson found a Dalhamia on the Jordan, a little town south of the lake, which he is inclined to believe to be this Dalmanutha. See map at page 62. There would then be no contradiction between Matthew and Mark. Our Saviour may have gone by ship to Dalhamia, as Mark would then say, and thence to Magdala. In that case Matthew simply mentions the place to which our Lord went before he left the ship, and the conversation with the Jews in regard to the sign.

§ 70.—The Demand for a Sign, 11–13. (See notes on Matt. xvi, 1–4.)

§ 71.—The Leaven of the Pharisees, 13–21.

13. *To the other side*—That is, from Dalmanutha or Magdala he recrosses to Butaiha, on the northeast side.

See notes on Matt. xvi, 5–12.

20 And [o] when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that [p] ye do not understand?

22 ¶ And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when [q] he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.

25 After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, [r] nor tell *it* to any in the town.

27 ¶ [s] And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, [t] John the Baptist: but some *say*, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, [u] Thou art the Christ.

o Matt. 15. 37; ver. 8.—p Chap. 6. 52; ver. 17.
q Chap. 7. 33.—r Matt. 8. 4; chap. 5. 43.

s Matt. 16. 13; Luke 9. 18.—t Matt. 14. 2.
u Matt. 16. 16; John 6. 69; 11. 27.

§ 72.—Gradual Curing of the Blind Man, 22–26.

This miracle is related by Mark alone.

22. *A blind man*—It is clear from verse 24 that he had not been born blind. *Besought him to touch him*—There was evidently no doubt on their part that a touch from our Lord would do the deed.

23. *Spit on his eyes*—See notes on chapter vii, 33. *Asked him if he saw aught*—Our Lord in this whole process of half curing and then wholly curing, shows that the result is completely at his command. He can, as at some times, perform the work without word or sign; at others with an instantaneous word; at others still with a word and sign; and finally, as here, with word and sign, arresting the completion as he pleases. Disease shall start, and depart forthwith, or go by lingering delays, as he permits.

24. *Men as trees, walking*—Had the man been born blind he would not have recognized either men or trees as such. One who has received his sight for the first time would not know a circle from a square, or identify any visible form as being what he had heretofore known.

26. *Nor tell it to any in the town*—Any man residing in the town. Very probably there was at this time a special suspicion existing of the authorities in regard to Jesus. Herod Philip (resident so near as Cesarea Philippi) may have been in Bethsaida. This supposition would account both for Jesus taking the man out of the town and for this prohibition to tell any man in it.

§ 73.—The Apostolic Inauguration at Cesarea Philippi, 27–30; Matt. xvi, 13–21.

27. *And Jesus went out*—From Bethsaida. *Towns of Cesarea*—The hamlets near the city. It does not appear that our Lord went into the city itself.

30 [v]And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

31 And [w]he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and *of* the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 ¶ And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, [x]Whosoever will come after me, let him [y]deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For [z]whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 [a]Whosoever therefore [b]shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

CHAPTER IX.

AND he said unto them, [a]Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen [b]the kingdom of God come with power.

2 ¶ [c]And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding [d]white as snow: so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

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v Matt. 16. 20.—*w* Matt. 16. 21; 17. 22; Luke 9 22.—*x* Matt. 10. 38; 16. 24; Luke 9 23; 14. 27. *y* Rom. 6. 6 8. 13; 1 Cor. 4. 9, 13; Phil. 3. 10. John 12. 25.—*z* Matt. 10. 33; Luke 9. 26; 12. 9.

b Rom. 1. 16; 2 Tim. 1. 8; 2. 12.—*a* Matt. 16 28 Luke 9. 27.—*b* Matt. 24. 30; 25. 31; Luke 22. 18 *c* Matthew 17. 1; Luke 9. 28.—*d* Daniel 7 9; Matthew 28. 3.

§ 74.—PREDICTIONS OF HIS OWN SUFFERING, AND ULTIMATE COMING TO JUDGE THE WORLD, 31–38. (See notes on Matt. xvi, 21–28.)

34. *When he had called the people*—The people were to hear this lesson, although they had not heard of the previous scene with the disciples on which it was founded For, according to Matthew, and in strict force of connection, it was addressed mainly to the disciples.

38. *Son of man...when he cometh*—For both the Son of man and the sons of men are going to the judgment day. He is to sit on the throne, and they to stand before it.

6 For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 [e]And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

11 ¶ And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes [f]that Elias must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and [g]how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and [h]be set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, That [i]Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

14 ¶ [k]And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him* saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye [1]with them?

17 And [1]one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he [2]teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

19 He answereth him, and saith, [m]O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and [n]when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

e Matt. 17. 9.—*f* Mal. 4. 5; Matt. 17. 10. *g* Psalm 22. 6; Isaiah 53. 2, &c.; Daniel 9. 26. *h* Luke 23. 11; Phil. 2. 7.—*i* Matt. 11. 14; 17. 12; Luke 1. 17.—*k* Matt. 17. 14; Luke 9. 37.

1 Or, *among yourselves?*—*l* Matt. 17. 17; Luke 9. 38.—2 Or, *dasheth him.*—*m* Deut. 32. 20 Psalm 78. 6, 8, 22; John 20. 27; Hebrews 3. 10, 12 *n* Chap. 1. 26; Luke 9. 42.

CHAPTER IX.

§ 75.—THE TRANSFIGURATION, 2–13. (See notes on Matt. xvii, 1–13.)

6. *He wist not*—He knew not. The verb *wist* comes from the old English to *wit*. It is cognate with the words *wit* and wisdom.

10. *Should mean*—Will he literally die, or is it a figure of speech? If figurative, what does it mean? If real, why should it take place, and what will become of us? Will he truly rise again? What if he should not? What then becomes of his past miracles and teachings? And how are we to explain this dazzling transfiguration? It is wonderful how completely the crucifixion of Jesus swept from the disciples' minds all hope of his resurrection, so that they could scarce believe it when it took place. See notes on chapter xvi, 10, 11

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, [o]If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; [p]help thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

o Matt. 17. 20; chap. 11. 23; Luke 17. 6; John 11. 40.

p Eph. 2. 8; Phil. 1. 29; 2 Thess. 1. 3, 11; Heb. 12. 2.

§ 76.—Healing the Child possessed of a Deaf and Dumb Demon, 14–29. (See notes on Matt. xvii, 14–21.)

22. *If thou canst do*—The father has hopes, but not strong faith. He knows this to be a most inveterate case. He has heard the revilings of the scribes, and is still watched by their sharp, sarcastic faces. He has heard of Jesus's power—he has perhaps seen it displayed; but that it can reach this case, after the plain failure of his disciples, is hard, and perhaps too good to believe.

23. *If thou canst believe*—An echo of the man's expression, *If thou canst do anything.* The man had evidence which required him to have and to use a proper amount of *faith.* As God does not require our *first faith* without giving us a first evidence, so our Lord first gave prior evidence of his divinity in order to create a first faith. But when that was done, the condition of the exercise of faith was an inexorable demand. Our Lord thus performed, as we may say, two classes of miracles.

All things are possible to him that believeth—When our Lord says "all things," we are to understand what classes of things he is speaking of, in which he includes all. And the condition ("to him that believeth") belongs not to every rash and presumptuous belief that the mind, not in communion with God, may conjure up. The belief and the grant to prayer of which Jesus speaks belong perhaps to the world in which he speaks, namely, the religious and spiritual world. And the belief of which he speaks is that faith of which God grants the power. All things within its sphere are possible to that faith; for God will not grant power to faith for things which he will not make possible.

24. *Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief*—Surely, the Spirit of God must have prompted words so wise and so suited to his case. I believe with all the strength I have; give me more strength that my faith may be more complete. And his faith was thus strong as could be required, and strong enough to *empower* Jesus to grant him the fulness of the blessing.

25. *The people came running together*—They had before run forward to him They now crowded around in close circle to witness the expected miracle. *Rebuked the foul spirit*—The words were not directed to the child, nor to his disease; but to the spirit that possessed the child and produced the disease. *Dumb and deaf*—Not that the spirit was dumb and deaf; for it is plain that he heard Jesus, and that he *cried* when driven from the child.

26. *Rent him*—Wrenched him around the space, as if struggling in the act of throwing the child off from his position. *As one dead*—Not only pros

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 [q]And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

30 ¶ And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know *it*.

31 [r]For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

33 ¶ [s]And he came to Capernaum: and being in the house he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, [t]If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And [u]he took a child, and set him in the midst of them and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me; and [v]whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 ¶ [w]And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us.

q Matthew 17. 19.—*r* Matthew 17. 22; Luke 9. 44.—*s* Matthew 18. 1; Luke 9. 46; 22. 24. *t* Matthew 20. 26, 27; chapter 10. 43.

u Matthew 18. 2; chapter 10. 16.—*v* Matthew 10. 40; Luke 9. 48; 10. 16; John 12. 44; 13. 20. *w* Numbers 11, 28; Luke 9. 49.

trated by the convulsions, but left in complete exhaustion and apparent lifelessness.

27. *Jesus took him by the hand*—Jesus now, in the place of the diabolical life, bestows upon him a true vitality which is at once natural and supernatural.

§ 77.—Jesus again foretells his Sufferings and his Resurrection, 30–32. (See note on Matt. xxii, 23.)

32. *And were afraid to ask him*—Our Lord did not encourage bold questions on their part in regard to this matter. He develops the truth in his own way gradually, as he sees their minds prepared for it. It is not until the passover supper that they fully feel that he is to leave them by death. And not even then is their faith so strong that they are prepared for an immovable faith in his resurrection. See on ver. 10

§ 79.—Humility illustrated by the Child—The Dispossessor of Demons who followeth not with us 33–50. (Compare notes on Matt xviii, 1–5.)

38. *Casting out devils in thy name*—Among the many who were favoured with our Lord's ministry, there was, it seems, one at any rate who had true faith in him to so high a degree as to be able, though not an apostle, to work miracles. *Followeth not us*—He probably had received no regular open commission from Christ to preach or work miracles.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: [x]for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For [y]he that is not against us is on our part.

41 [z]For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

42 [a]And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 [b]And if thy hand [3]offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 [c]Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye [4]offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire:

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

x 1 Cor. 12. 3.—*y* See Matt. 12. 30.—*z* Matt. 10. 42.—*a* Matt. 18. 6; Luke 17. 1.—*b* Deut. 13. 6; Matt. 5. 29; 18. 8.—3 Or, *cause thee to offend*
c Isaiah 66. 24.—4 Or, *cause thee to offend.*

39. *That can lightly speak evil of me*—If he uses my name he must believe that mine is a divine name. If he can work wonders by it, his faith must be both true and great. If God enable him to perform miracles, the divine obligation is upon him. He therefore cannot speak contemptuously of the name by faith in which he achieves miracles of mercy. He will never pronounce I am an impostor, or join the scribes in saying that I cast out devils through the prince of devils.

It cannot be denied that this furnishes a strong reproof to bigots who are ready to deny the Christian or the churchly name to those who are not of their own organization. Where those who differ from us do not endanger the fundamentals of repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we must be very cautious how we *forbid* them because they follow not us. We may love our own doctrines, discipline, usages, and denomination, we may defend them at the proper time with firmness and boldness; but let us not be unjust to the piety and the zeal in the cause of Christ and the good of mankind, which exist in other denominations of Christians.

40. *He that is not against us*—Every expeller of demons that works separately from us must be held to be on our part, unless he is against us. He who thus is not against us is on our side.

41. *Give you a cup of water*—See note on Matt. x, 42.

42, 43. Consult our notes on Matt. xviii, 6.

43. *The fire that never shall be quenched*—Our Lord gives a stronger expression than Isaiah lxvi, 24, presents. It is not simply "shall not be quenched," but "never" shall be quenched. This carries the thought far beyond the mere temporal fires of Hinnom, even to that unquenchable fire for which he uses the fire of Hinnom as a figure. Jesus repeats the expression with great solemnity thrice, as if to show that the highest possible meaning was to be attributed to his word.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, [d] and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50 [e] Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? [f] Have salt in yourselves, and [g] have peace one with another.

CHAPTER X.

AND [a] he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 ¶ [b] And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, [c] Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.

6 But from the beginning of the creation [d] God made them male and female.

7 [e] For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

d Lev. 2. 13; Ezek. 43. 24.——*e* Matt. 5. 13; Luke 14. 34.——*f* Eph. 4. 29; Col. 4. 6.——*g* Rom. 12. 18; 14. 19; 2 Cor. 13. 11; Heb. 12. 14.——*a* Matt. 19. 1; John 10. 40; 11. 7.——*b* Matt. 19. 3.——*c* Deut. 24. 1 Matt. 5. 31; 19. 7.——*d* Gen. 1. 27; 5. 2.——*e* Gen. 2. 24; 1 Cor 6. 16; Eph. 5. 31.

49. *Salted with fire*—As *salt*, from its antiseptic qualities, was an ancient emblem of purification, so *salted* here is equivalent to *purified*, and "salted with fire" is equivalent to "purified with fire." Now every one (who is purified) is indeed purified by the *fire* of the Spirit of God. See note on Matthew iii, 11. And that same fire of God's holiness which purifies the saint, constitutes the penal fire of the obdurate sinner, so that the essential base of the fire in verses 48 and 49 is the same. The particle *for* connects verse 49 with verse 47, and shows that the severity of the purgation which is expressed by *fire* here is the same as that expressed by *cutting off* in the previous verses. Undergo this purgative severity of cutting off and plucking out all the members of sin, *for* it is by this severe and *fiery* ordeal that we are purified, as a meat offering is purified by salt. *And every sacrifice shall be salted with salt*—The Greek word for *and* might better be rendered *as*. There is a comparison thus introduced. Every soul is purified with fire as every sacrifice is salted with salt. See Lev. ii, 13.

50. *Salt is good*—Whether it be a natural or a spiritual element, it is a good creation of God. As the natural substance is excellent, so it is the rightful symbol of spiritual excellence. *If the salt have lost his saltness*—See notes on Matthew v, 13. *Have salt in yourselves*—Let the emblem of active, sharp purity, symbolised by *salt*, be in you. There is something of sharpness in the reformatory spirit, which is felt to be acrid and unpleasant by those who need the benefit of it. Nevertheless this does not excuse us from the possession of the element. *And have peace*—Let your purity, and your purifying element, with all its sharpness, be characterized by the spirit of love. So in the East *salt* is the emblem of fidelity and friendship. To eat salt with a man and then be his enemy is the height of treachery. The same salt which is an element of purity, is also an emblem of peace and perpetuity.

CHAPTER X.

§ 103.—JESUS HAVING LEFT GALILEE, IN PEREA, DISCUSSES THE LAW OF MARRIAGE. (See notes on Matt. xix, 1–12.)

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What [f]therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*.

11 And he saith unto them, [g]Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

13 ¶ [h]And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*.

14 But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for [i]of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, [j]Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 ¶ [k]And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, [l]Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have [m]treasure in heaven: and come, take up thy cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that

[f] Rom. 7. 1. 3; 1 Cor. 7. 10.—[g] Matt. 5. 32; 19. 9; Luke 16. 18; Rom. 7. 3; 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11.—[h] Exod. 10. 9; Deut. 31. 12; Joel 2. 16; Matt. 19. 13; Luke 18. 15.—[i] 1 Cor. 14. 20; 1 Pet. 2. 2.—[j] Matt. 18. 9. [k] Matt. 19. 16; Luke 18. 18.—[l] Ex. 20; Rom. 13. 9. [m] Matt. 6. 19, 20; 19. 21; Luke 12. 23; 16. 9.

12. *If a woman*—By the Mosaic law the woman seems to have had no legal right to divorce her husband. Yet several instances appear in Jewish history, of a woman's abandoning her husband and marrying another during the first husband's life; nor does there seem to have been any law to punish such wickedness. Jesus virtually puts both sexes on a level in the Christian dispensation. Neither has a right to divorce for other cause than unchasteness, and neither, so divorced, has a right to marry again.

§ 104.—The Blessing of Young Children, 13–16. (See notes on Matt. xix, 13–15, and Luke xviii, 15.)

13. *Touch them*—In accordance, with the Old Testament custom. Gen. xlvii, 14. He should lay his right hand on them and pray the divine benediction upon them.

§ 105.—Possibility of a Rich Man's being saved, 17–31. (See notes on Matt xix, 23–30.)

§ 106.—His Sufferings again foretold, 32–34. (See on Matt. xx, 17–19.)

saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 ¶ [n] And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them [o] that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for [p] with God all things are possible.

28 ¶ [q] Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 [r] But he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

31 [s] But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

32 ¶ [t] And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. [u] And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33 *Saying*, [v] Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and [x] they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:

34 And they shall [y] mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him, and [z] the third day he shall rise again.

35 ¶ [a] And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto

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n Matt. 19. 23; Luke 18. 24.—*o* Job 31. 24; Psa. 52. 7; 62. 10; 1 Tim. 6. 17.—*p* Jer. 32. 17; Matt. 19. 26; Luke 1. 37.—*q* Matt. 19. 27; Luke 18. 28. *r* 2 Chron. 25. 9; Luke 18. 30.—*s* Matt. 19. 30; 20. 16; Luke 13. 30.—*t* Matt. 20. 17; Luke 13. 31. *u* Chap. 8. 31; 9. 31; Luke 9. 22; 18. 31.—*v* Acts 20. 22.—*x* Acts 13. 27; Jas. 5. 6.—*y* Psa. 22, 3, 8; Isa. 53. 3.—*z* 1 Cor. 15. 4.—*a* Matt. 20. 20.

Our Lord is now on his final journey to Jerusalem, before his crucifixion.

32. *Jesus...before them...amazed...followed*—The picture is a very striking one. As our Lord is boldly starting to move forward, and is about leading on the way, his tremulous and trembling disciples hesitate in dismay at the prospect of going to the capital at the present time. Our Lord then pauses with them at the wayside to show that the destiny which he goes to meet is the divine destiny of his mission.

§ 107.—Ambitious Request of Salome for her Sons, 35–46. (See notes on Matt. xx, 20–28.)

him, saying, Master, [b] we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, [c] Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, [d] We can. And Jesus said unto them, [e] Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared.

41 [f] And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, [g] Ye know that they which [1] are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 [h] But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even [i] the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and [k] to give his life a ransom for many.

46 ¶ [l] And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou

b 1 Kings 2. 16, 20.—*c* Jeremiah 45. 5; Romans 9. 26; James 4. 3.—*d* John 13. 37—*e* Acts 12. 2; Revelation 1. 9.—*f* Matthew 20. 24.—*g* Luke 22. 22.—1 Or, *think good.*

h Matthew 20. 26, 28; chap. 9. 35; Luke 9. 48. *i* John 13. 14; Philippians 2. 7.—*k* Matthew 20. 28; 1 Timothy 2. 6; Titus 2. 14.—*l* Matthew 20. 29; Luke 18. 35.

According to Matthew, the request is made by the mother of James and John. But if the two sons did not verbally make the request, they spoke through the mouth of their mother.

§ 108.—HEALING OF BLIND BARTIMEUS, 46–52. (See notes on Matt. xx, 29–34.

46. *Bartimeus*—The word Bar in Hebrew signifies son, as Bar-Jesus, son of Jesus, (Acts xiii, 6,) Bar-Jona, Bartholemew. Bartimeus is son of Timeus. He seems to have been a well known blind beggar of that locality, and hence his name is given.

that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; [m]thy faith hath [2]made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

CHAPTER XI.

AND [a]when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring *him*.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that [b]the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

8 [c]And many spread their garments in the way; and others [d]cut down branches off the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, [e]Hosanna; Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10 Blessed *be* [f]the kingdom of our father David, that cometh

m Matthew 9. 22; chap. 5. 34.—2 Or, *saved thee*.—*a* Matt. 21. 1; Luke 19. 29; John 12. 14. *b* Psa. 24. 1; Acts 10. 36.

c Matthew 21. 8.—*d* Leviticus 23. 40.—*e* Psalm 118. 26.—*f* Isaiah 9. 6, 7; Jeremiah 33. 15, 17; Ezekiel 34. 23, 24.

CHAPTER XI.

§ 111.—TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM, 1–11. (See notes on Matthew xxi, 1–17.)

2. *A colt tied*—Matthew has it, "an ass tied, and a colt with her." This is variation but not contradiction. It is the purpose of Matthew to show the accordance of our Lord's conveyance into Jerusalem with the predictions of prophecy, which required the mention of the ass and her foal. It is Mark's purpose simply to narrate that our Lord rode triumphantly into Jerusalem, without dwelling specially upon the animal he rode.

4. *Where two ways met*—Some understand by this the fork of a road; but it more properly signifies a street or thoroughfare. The original word signifies "a circular or winding way," as the streets of ancient towns generally were. The apostles also found these animals, Mark tells us, *by the door without;* that is, probably, before the door of the owner, who had just used or was just about to use them.

10. *The kingdom...that cometh*—They not only blessed the king but also the kingdom. It was the kingdom of our father David, which is to be restored enlarged and glorified by this his more glorious Son. As David was the conqueror of surrounding nations, so this his illustrious descendant will emancipate Israel, subdue Rome, and make Jerusalem mistress of the world. Thus would he be, in accordance with their desires, a mere temporal Messiah. See

in the name of the Lord: [g]Hosanna in the highest.

11 [h]And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

12 ¶ [1]And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

13 [j]And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, [k]No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. And his disciples heard *it*.

15 ¶ [1]And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, [m]My house shall be called [1]of all nations the house of prayer? but [n]ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 And [o]the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because [p]all the people were astonished at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

g Psalm 148. 1.—*h* Matthew 21. 12.—*i* Matt. 21. 18.—*j* Matthew 21. 19.—*k* John 15. 6; Hebrews 6. 4, 8, 10; 2 Peter 2. 20.—*l* Matt. 21. 12; Luke 19. 45; John 2. 14.

m Isaiah 56. 7.—1 Or, *a house of prayer for all nations?*—*n* Jeremiah 7. 11.—*o* Matthew 21. 45, 46; Luke 19. 47.—*p* Matthew 7. 28; chap. 1. 22; Luke 4. 32.

notes on Matthew iv, 8–10. *In the name of the Lord*—That is, in the name of Jehovah, the ancient God of Israel.

11. *Looked round about upon all things*—Our Saviour, as Lord of the temple, solemnly surveyed the wickedness that prevailed in the house of God. He was preparing to perform that stern symbolical purgation of casting out the traffickers. *Eventide*—The old English word *tide* signified the same as *time;* hence *eventide* is equivalent to evening time. *Went out unto Bethany*—The residence of Lazarus and his two sisters.

§ 112.—The Withering of the Fig Tree, 12–14. (See notes on Matt. xxi, 18–22.)

12. *The morrow*—Monday of Passion Week.

14. *No man eat...forever*—As the tree had neglected to bring forth fruit, it is forever deprived of the power to bring forth fruit. Powers disused are powers forfeited. From him that hath not *fruit* shall be taken away that which he hath, namely, *the capability of fruit.*

§ 112.—The Cleansing of the Temple, 15–19. (See notes on Matt. xii, 13; see Luke xix, 45–48.)

15. *Went into the temple*—Which he had yesterday surveyed. See on verse 11.

16. *Carry any vessel*—The word *vessel* here signifies any utensil or instrument of any kind, including working tools or military arms. According to the rabbinical writers it was forbidden to carry a staff or burden through the sacred place.

19. *When even was come*—The evening of Monday of the Passion Week. *Went out of the city*—To his friends at Bethany.

20 ¶ [q] And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, [2] Have faith in God.

23 For [r] verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you, [s] What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25 And when ye stand praying, [t] forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But [u] if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 ¶ And they come again to Jerusalem: [x] and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one [3] question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

31 And they reasoned with

q Matt. 21. 19.——2 Or, *Have the faith of God.* *r* Matt. 17. 20; 21. 21; Luke 17. 6.——*s* Matt. 7. 7; Luke 11. 9; John 14. 13; 15. 7; 16. 24; James 1. 5, 6.——*t* Matthew 6. 14; Colossians 3. 13.——*u* Matthew 18. 35.——*x* Matthew 21. 23 Luke 20. 1.——3 Or, *thing.*

§ 113.—The Withered Fig Tree remarked, and Reflections, 20–26.

20. *In the morning*—Of Tuesday in the Passion Week. *Dried up from the roots*—Marking how total was the death and aridness of the tree. The decay of long years was wrought upon it in a few hours, perhaps in a moment.

22. *Have faith in God*—So complete was the evidence of miraculous power that it furnished foundation for a lesson of miraculous faith.

24. *Therefore*—In view of this readiness of God to make your faith true the instant that it exists. *I say*—I declare this high privilege of the faithful soul. *Unto you*—Who have attained full communion with God. *Believe that ye receive them*—Trust that God is already granting while ye pray. *And ye shall have them*—The gift shall commence as soon as the faith is complete. While ye trust that it is being granted, it is being granted. The prayer and the answer are coexistent, as instantaneous cause and effect.

25. *Forgive*—In the very act of prayer. God's forgiveness of all our transgression must lie at the bottom of all other blessings. Otherwise we are unreconciled to him and our prayers are unheard. But how can we expect forgiveness of God, against whom we have most highly offended, if we refuse to forgive our fellows who have offended us far less. So this forgiveness by us is requisite in order to our possessing true faith, and that faith is necessary to procure anything from God.

§ 114.—Discourse with Chief Priests, etc., in the Temple, 27–xii, 12.

themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for [z] all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

CHAPTER XII.

AND [a] he began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man [b] planted a vineyard, [c] and set a hedge about *it*, and digged *a place for* the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled.

5 And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet therefore [d] one son, his well beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, [e] This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture; [f] The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

z Matthew 3. 5; 14. 5; 21. 26; chap. 1. 5; 6. 20.
a Ezekiel 20. 49; Matthew 21. 33; Luke 20. 9.
b Psalm 80. 8, 16; Isaiah 5. 1, 7; Jeremiah 2. 21; Romans 11. 17, 24.—c Romans 3. 1, 2; 9. 4, 5.
d Psalm 2. 7.—e Psalm 2. 2, 3; 22. 12, 16.
f Psalm 118. 22.

CHAPTER XII.

1-12 See our notes on Matthew xxi, 33–45.

2. *He sent . . . a servant*—Matthew says *servants*, in the plural. Doubtless Mark specifies the principal servant or messenger, who was attended by many others. This is implied in the fifth verse, where it is said that he sent another servant, and him they killed; and many others, beating some and killing some. Mark, being the more minute in his details, may be supposed to give with more exactness the Lord's words.

3. *Beat him, and sent him away empty*—Mark minutely describes the gradual climax of their advancing villany. This servant was only beaten and dismissed empty, that is, without any payment or rentage. They at first scarce dared little more than the withholding the due. The second servant is so wounded in the head and shamefully treated that it seems not worth while to add that he departed unpaid. The third, with his retinue, undergoes beating and slaughter,

12 [g] And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

13 ¶ [h] And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cesar or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a [1] penny, that I may see *it*.

16 And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cesar's.

17 And Jesus answering said unto them, [i] Render to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 ¶ [k] Then come unto him the Sadducees, [l] which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, [m] Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering said unto them, [n] Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but [o] are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, [p] I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

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g Matt. 21. 45, 46; chap. 11. 18; John 7. 25, 30, 44.
h Matt. 22. 15; Luke 20. 20.——1 Gr. *denarion.*
See Matt. 18. 28.——*i* Rom. 13. 7; 1 Pet. 2. 17.
k Matt. 22. 23; Luke 20. 27.——*l* Acts 23. 8.
m Deut. 25. 5.——*n* Isaiah 8. 20; Jeremiah 8. 7, 9.
o 1 Cor. 15. 42, 49, 52.——*p* Exod. 3. 6; Acts 7. 32.

THE HERODIANS ATTACK JESUS, 13–17. (See notes on Matt. xxii, 15–22.)

THE SADDUCEES ATTACK JESUS, 18–27. (See notes on Matt. xxii, 23–33.)

25. *Are as the angels*—Their bodies are divested of their earthly grossness and become ethereal and glorious. As none are *born* in heaven, so none are *married*. The appetites of the body, and all the affection thereon founded, cease. The love in heaven may be the continuance of love on earth. It will doubtless often exist between the same parties. But it will be purer more blissful, and glorious.

26. *In the bush*—See Exodus iii, 6

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

28 ¶ [q] And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, [r] Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.

31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, [s] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; [t] and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, [u] is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. [w] And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

35 ¶ [x] And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

36 For David himself said [y] by the Holy Ghost, [z] The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 ¶ And [a] he said unto them in his doctrine, [b] Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and [c] *love* salutations in the marketplaces,

39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40 [d] Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41 ¶ [e] And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and be-

q Matt. 22. 35.——*r* Deut. 6. 4; Luke 10. 27. *s* Lev. 19. 18; Matt. 22. 39; Rom. 13. 9; Gal. 5. 14; James 2. 8.——*t* Deut. 4. 39; Isa. 45. 6, 14; 46. 9.——*u* 1 Sam. 15. 22; Hos. 6. 6; Mic. 6. 6-8.

w Matt. 22. 46; Rom. 3. 19.——*x* Matt. 22. 41; Luke 20. 41.——*y* 2 Sam. 23. 2.——*z* Psa. 110. 1 *a* Chap. 4. 2.——*b* Matt. 23. 1, &c.; Luke 20. 46, 47. *c* Luke 11. 43.——*d* Matt. 23. 14.——*e* Luke 21. 1.

THE CANDID SCRIBE, 28–34. (See notes on Matt. xxii, 34–40.)

THE TWO MITES OF THE POOR WIDOW, 41–44.

This beautiful narrative is given by Mark and Luke alone.

41. *Jesus sat over against the treasury* The successive contests with rulers, Herodians, Pharisees, Sadducees, are scarce concluded, and the rage of his enemies like a fire is burning. But from those high excitements the Lord subsides not into reaction, but to a calm tranquillity. No unholy passion disturbs his soul, no wounded recollection haunts his conscience, no plot of mur-

held how the people cast money [f] into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That [g] this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, [h] *even* all her living.

CHAPTER XIII.

AND [a] as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*

f 2 Kin. 12. 9.—*g* 2 Cor. 8. 12.—*h* Deut. 24. 6.

1 John 3. 17.—*a* Matthew 24. 1; Luke 21. 5.

der excites his fancy. He rushes not from the temple but seats himself in self-possessed repose, watching the doings at the temple treasury.

In the court of the women, near the pillars that lined its square, there stood ranged at due intervals eleven chests, of a trumpet form, to receive the offerings of Israel. (See our temple plan.) These offerings were not the tribute for the government, but the donation of liberal hearts for the expenses of the temple. They were indications, more or less sincere, of the value set by the offerer upon the worship and the house of God.

Many that were rich cast in much—The fact of their wealth destroys not the merit of a genuine liberality. For experience shows that a wealthy purse is no enlargement of a covetous heart. The rich in pocket are often poor in soul and scanty in liberality. Hence, all the more noble is the picture of the wealthy man, rich in soul, who from his abundance gives his *much*. This is the most truly enviable point in the fortune of the rich.

42. *A certain poor widow*—Our Lord had just been launching reproofs against the proud who devoured *widows' houses*. As if from the dim distance one of these *widows* seems to have appeared, whose house, perhaps, had been devoured, and in whose behalf our Lord had denounced the judgments of God.

She threw in two mites—A mite was the smallest of Jewish coins; it was the fifth part of a cent. Less than a mite the widow could not contribute. To give a mite was a fair donation, but she will be munificent to God's house and double the sum! The rabbins, however, seem to have had a rule forbidding the contribution of less than two mites.

43. *Called unto him his disciples*—There was a sight to see, and a lesson to learn. It is true that the contributions made by these pious souls were likely to be wasted by a profligate hierarchy. But still the poor widow intends it as an offering to God. It is the evidence of her faith and love, not for the den of thieves, but for the house of God and the God of that house. *Hath cast more in*—Not more in pecuniary amount, but more in the amount of faith and heart. God estimates the liberality according to the ability of the giver. And so the Saviour, who now sat to behold and bless the widow's offering, forever lives, forever watches, and forever blesses the offerings of the faithful heart and the liberal hand in his cause. And the judgment that he now passes sitting at the treasury, he will finally confirm when he sits upon the throne.

CHAPTER XIII.

§ 118.—JESUS FORETELLS THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, AND DISTINGUISHES IT FROM THE FINAL JUDGMENT, 1–37. (See notes on Matt. xxiv, 1–xxv, 30.)

2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? [b] there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately,

4 [c] Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus answering them began to say, [d] Take heed lest any *man* deceive you:

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall* not *be* yet.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and

b Luke 19. 44.—*c* Matt. 24. 3; Luke 21. 7.

d Jer. 29. 8; Eph. 5. 6; 1 Thess. 2. 3.

6. *Saying, I am Christ*—The FIRST SIGN of approaching downfall should be the numerous false deliverers and spurious messiahs, (the Hebrew word for Christs,) which should *deceive many.* At that period the acknowledged prophetic chronology demanded the appearance of the true Messiah so clearly that a general expectation of his advent was even then prevalent. Of this expectation impostors plentifully availed themselves; thus punishing the nation who had rejected the true one, and at the same time furnishing a SIGN of the decline of the Jewish state. Such was the false Egyptian prophet at the head of thirty thousand men, (Acts xxi, 38,) about twelve years after our Lord's death; and Theudas, a false deliverer, who, Josephus says, almost in our Lord's words, *deceived many.* Under the procuratorship of Felix, in the reign of Nero, such impostors were so numerous that some were taken and slain almost daily. Among false Christs, distinctively, were Dositheus appearing as the Christ foretold by Moses, and Simon Magus as son of God. Josephus says, Many affirmed the time of the advent to have arrived; and Hegesippus says, Many false Christs came.

7. *Wars and rumours of wars*—The SECOND SIGN, of wars and warlike rumours, was abundantly fulfilled. At our Lord's birth the temple of Janus was closed for the second time, in history, in token of universal peace. From his death to the destruction of Jerusalem the Jewish people knew little of perfect and peaceful repose. It is not necessary to detail the long train of turbulences during the interval of forty years. But that Jerusalem was in constant terror from threatened or actual war, for a protracted period before her downfall, will abundantly appear from the history of the times.

8. *Earthquakes.*—Convulsions of this kind marked this period in various parts of the known world. At Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, the beautiful cities of Asiatic Greece, these signs were given, as mentioned by Grotius. The cities of Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse were completely overthrown. Rome was twice visited by this fearful *sign* during this period. But perhaps Jerusalem herself was warned most loudly by a terrible earthquake, accompanied by thunders, lightnings, and overwhelming storms.

Famines and *pestilences,* (Luke XXI. 11,) the FOURTH SIGN, are ever attendant upon general civil commotions and wars. The cessation of the labours of husbandry produces scarcity; exposure, hardship, and the effluvium of the dead produce *pestilences.* The Greek words for famine and pestilence have a very similar sound, *limos* and *loimos*

troubles: [e] these *are* the beginnings of [1] sorrows.

9 ¶ But [f] take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

[e] Matt. 24. 8.—[1] Gr. *pains as of a woman in travail.*—[f] Matt. 10. 17, 18; 24. 9; Rev. 2. 10.

And famine and pestilence are so conjoined in experience that it was a Greek proverb, after *limos* comes *loimos*. Josephus says, that the famine under Claudius Cesar (predicted by Agabus, Acts xi, 28) was so severe that at Jerusalem many died of starvation.

To these Luke adds, there shall be "fearful sights and great signs from heaven." On this FIFTH SIGN Dr. Clarke makes the following concise summary.

Josephus, in his preface to the Jewish Wars, enumerates these: 1st. A star hung over the city like a sword; and a comet continued a whole year. 2d. The people being assembled at the feast of unleavened bread, at the ninth hour of the night, a great light shone about the altar and the temple, and this continued for half an hour. 3d. At the same feast, a cow led to sacrifice brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple! 4th. The eastern gate of the temple, which was of solid brass, and very heavy, and could hardly be shut by twenty men, and was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was seen at the sixth hour of the night to open of its own accord! 5th. Before sun-setting there were seen over all the country, chariots and armies fighting in the clouds, and besieging cities. 6th. At the feast of Pentecost, when the priests were going into the inner temple by night, to attend their service, they heard first a motion and noise, and then a voice as of a multitude, saying, LET US DEPART HENCE. 7th. What Josephus reckons one of the most terrible signs of all was, that one Jesus, a country fellow, four years before the war began, and when the city was at peace and plenty, came to the feast of tabernacles, and ran crying up and down the streets, day and night: "A voice from the east! a voice from the west! a voice from the four winds! a voice against Jerusalem and the temple! a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! and a voice against all the people!" Though the magistrates endeavored by stripes and tortures to restrain him, yet he still cried with a mournful voice, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" And this he continued to do for several years together, going about the walls and crying with a loud voice: "Woe, woe to the city, and to the people, and to the temple;" and as he added, "Woe, woe to myself!" a stone from some sling or engine struck him dead on the spot! It is worthy of remark that Josephus appeals to the testimony of *others*, who saw and heard these fearful things. Tacitus, a Roman historian, gives very nearly the same account with that of Josephus. (*Hist.*, lib. v.)

These are the beginnings of sorrows—Terrible as all these omens seem, they are small compared to the miseries of the siege and downfall of the holy city.

9. *They shall deliver you*—From the sorrows of the Jews our Lord now turns to the persecutions of the Christians. Compare Matthew xxiv, 9. The fulfilment of the predictions of the Christian persecutions is thus given by Whitby:

"1. They suffered "a great fight of afflictions," (Heb. x, 32, 33,) being persecuted by those of their own nation, (1 Thess. ii, 14, 15,) and suffering fiery trials from them. 1 Pet. iv, 12. "I persecuted them," saith St. Paul, "to strange cities." Acts xxvi, 11. 2. They were imprisoned: Peter, Acts iv, 3; Paul and Silas, Acts xvi, 23; 2 Cor. xi, 23; "I delivered up to prison men and women." Acts xxii, 4. "I shut up many of the saints in prison," saith St. Paul. Acts xxvi, 10. 3. They were beaten in the synagogue: St. Paul and Silas, Acts xvi, 23; 2 Cor. xi, 23–25; Peter and John, Acts v, 18. 4. They were brought before councils and sanhedrims

10 And [g] the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 [h] But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, [i] but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now [k] the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 [l] And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but [m] he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 ¶ [n] But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, [o] spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then [p] let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains:

15 And let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take anything out of his house:

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17 [q] But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

19 [r] For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no

g Matt. 24. 14.—*h* Matt 10. 19; Luke 12. 11; 21. 14.—*i* Acts 2. 4; 4. 8. 31.—*k* Micah 7. 6; Matthew 10. 21; 24. 10; Luke 21. 16.—*l* Matthew 24. 9; Luke 21. 17.—*m* Daniel 12. 12; Matthew 10. 22; 24. 13; Heb. 3. 14; Rev. 2. 10. *n* Matthew 24. 15.—*o* Daniel 9. 27.—*p* Luke 21. 21.—*q* Luke 21. 23; 26, 29.—*r* Daniel 9. 26; 12. 1; Joel 2. 2; Matthew 24. 21.

Peter and John, Acts iv, 3, 6; the disciples, Acts viii, 3. Before kings: James and Peter before Herod, Acts xii, 1, 2; Paul and Peter before Nero. Before rulers: Paul before Gallio, Felix, and Festus. Acts xviii, 12; xxiii, 33; xxv, 6. 5. They were killed: Stephen by the judgment of the council, Acts vii, 59; James the Greater by Herod, Acts xii, 1; the Less by Ananus the high priest; yea, multitudes of Christians were persecuted to the death by Saul, Acts xxii, 4; by Nero, Tacit. Annal. 15, p. 363; by the Jews, Justin. Mart. Dial. cum Tryph., p. 234, 235. 6. We learn from Tacitus, in the place forecited, that Christians were delivered up by their parents, brethren, kinsfolk, friends; from Josephus, that contention sprang up in their very houses; and that the Idumeans slew many of their own kindred; and from the Scripture, that the Jews persecuted those of their own country. 1 Thess. ii, 15.

7. That upon occasion of these persecutions "the love of many waxed cold, and many Jews" revolted from the Christian faith. And, lastly, of the care of God in preserving his faithful servants in this time of imminent danger, Eusebius informs us, saying, that "before the war all the faithful of the Church of Jerusalem were astonished by an oracle delivered by revelation to men approved there, to depart from the city, and to get over Jordan, and to go to Pella." The occasion of this departure was, saith Dr. Hammond, wonderful; for Cestus Gallus then besieged the city; and if he would, saith Josephus, he might easily have taken it, and put an end to the war; but he, without cause, raising the siege and going from it, many eminent Jews fled from the city as from a sinking ship, among whom doubtless were those Christians who remained after the destruction of Jerusalem."

flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 [s]And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or, lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not:

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.

23 But [t]take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

24 ¶ [u]But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 [x]And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 [y]Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 So ye in like manner, when

s Matt. 24. 23; Luke 17. 23; 21. 8.—*t* 2 Peter 3. 17.—*u* Daniel 7. 10; Zephaniah 1. 15; Matthew 24. 29, &c.; Luke 21. 25, &c.

x Dan. 7. 13; Matt. 16. 27; 24. 30; chap 14. 62; Acts 1. 11; 1 Thess. 4. 16; 2 Thess. 1. 7. 10 Rev. 1. 7.—*y* Matt. 24. 32; Luke 21. 29, &c.

24–27. All before the beginning of this paragraph describes the ruin of the Jewish state; all subsequent to that beginning predicts the judgment day. Did but this report of our Lord's discourse alone exist, not the slightest difficulty would exist in its interpretation. All the difficulty in fact arises in Matt. xxiv, 29 being the parallel passage to the first verse of this paragraph; and all the difficulty in that verse arises from the word "immediately."

Mark says that the "sun shall be darkened," etc., "in those days, after that tribulation." Making allowance for prophetic perspective and for the intentional obscurity, the phrase "those days" may bring us down to the last period of time. It thus stands in contrast with the phrase "these things" in the apostle's question. The period of the destruction and the period of the advent stand, as the Lord intended, in stupendous contrast.

If we ask, When shall the second advent take place? Mark answers, It is in THOSE DAYS which are *after that* (Jewish) *tribulation*. If we ask, In what part of THOSE DAYS? Matthew will answer *Immediately after the* (mundane) *tribulation of* THOSE DAYS.

We have then this parallel: a tribulation including the city's destruction, a tribulation ending in the world's judgment.

That a tribulation is to precede the second advent is the clear doctrine of Scripture. Thus, in Rev. xx, 7–10, at the close of the millennial thousand years, Satan, who had been bound during that period, is let loose, and with his armies besieges the camp of the saints just before the appearance of the judgment throne. And in 2 Peter iii: "In the last days scoffers shall come," etc. Of this truth the Jewish tradition gives a shadowing, in the doctrine that a desperate tribulation shall precede Messiah's advent. "The Jews (as Kuinoel observes) expected that great calamities would precede the advent of the Messiah; yet at the time when these calamities should have reached their height they hoped that he would unexpectedly appear."—*Bloomfield's Recensio Synoptica.*

ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but [z]my words shall not pass away.

32 ¶ But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 [a]Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 [b]*For the Son of man is* as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

35 [c]Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest coming suddenly [1]he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER [a]two days was *the feast of* the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the

z Isaiah 40. 8.—*a* Matthew 24. 42; 25. 13; Luke 12. 40; 21. 34; Romans 13. 11; 1 Thess. 5. 6. *b* Matthew 24. 45; 25. 14.

c Matthew 24. 42, 44.—*d* Proverbs 24. 33, 34; Romans 13. 11, 14; Ephesians 5. 14.—*a* Matthew 26. 2; Luke 22. 1; John 11. 55; 13. 1.

32. *But*—This is the turning point of the contrast between *these things* and *that day*. *Not the angels...neither the Son*—This is a most important text to prove the pure humanity of the Son of man. His humanity was neither infinite nor omniscient. In his childhood he grew in stature and in wisdom; at his temptation he struggled with the deceptions of the crafty adversary; at his agony his soul was exceeding sorrowful, and here he knows not *the day or the hour* of his own second coming. As his human mind was not omniscient, so there were facts to it unknown. This union of the divine and human in Christ is more inexplicable than the union of our soul and body, solely because it occurs but once and has no analogy.

It has, indeed, been argued, that inasmuch as the Son is here named after the *angels* in the order of ascending climax, we must understand it to be the Son of God and not the Son of man. The result of this would be to prove that our Lord in his highest personality was limited in knowledge. But those who thus argue forget that even as Son of man he was superior to the angels. They are his ministers. It is as Son of man he judges the world attended by HIS *holy angels!* Surely it is a thousand times more wonderful that the judgment day should be unknown to the judge than to his mere attendant officers. And this expression, *neither the Son*, stands in striking coincidence with our Lord's expression: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, *which the Father hath put in his own power*." Acts i, 7.

37. *What I say unto you*—The few disciples who now hear me. *I say unto all*—Who do not hear me. For they were representative men. Through them our Saviour addressed all ages. His words speak to the congregated Church—to you, reader, and to me—Watch. So that these words do not literally intimate that our Lord expected the judgment day to come in that generation. See supplementary note to Matt. xxv.

CHAPTER XIV.

§ 120.—REMAINING TRANSACTIONS OF TUESDAY PRECEDING THE CRUCIFIXION, 1–11. (See notes on Matt. xxvi, 1–16.)

chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.

2 But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 ¶ [b] And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat *at meat*, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of [1] spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on his head.

4 And [c] there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred [2] pence, and have been given to the poor. [d] And they murmured against her.

6 And Jesus said, [e] Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For [f] ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 ¶ [g] And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them

11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

12 ¶ [h] And the first day of unleavened bread, when they [3] killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, [1] where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

b Matthew 26. 6; John 12. 1, 3. See Luke 7. 37. 1 Or, *pure nard*, or *liquid nard*.——*c* Eccles. 7. 4.——2 See Matthew 18. 28.——*d* John 6. 43; 1 Cor. 10. 10; Phil. 2. 14.

e Isaiah 54. 17; 2 Cor. 10. 18.——*f* Deut. 15. 11. *g* Matthew 26. 14; Luke 22. 3, 4.——*h* Matthew 26. 17; Luke 22. 7.——3 Or, *sacrificed*.——*i* Revelation 3. 20.

3. *Spikenard*—Nard, according to Dr. Royle, is the botanic Nardostachys Jatamansi, an odorous plant derived from the mountains of India near the sources of the Ganges. The nard perfume was a compound of all the most valued perfumes of antiquity, among which were the malabathrum, costus amomum, myrrha, and balsam. *Very precious*—The three hundred pence was about forty-five dollars; thrice the price for which Judas sold his Lord.

13. *Meet you a man*—As the apostles enter the city from the east the water carrier with his filled pitcher is returning home from the west. Hence Dr. Barclay well argues that the tradition which places the cœnaculum or last supper on the western part of Zion is incorrect. The two apostles having passed through the temple grounds, and crossed the great bridge, would not proceed far before they would *meet* him bringing his jar of fresh water from Gihon or Etham,

15 And [k]he will show you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 [l]And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, [m]One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is* it I? and another *said*, *Is* it I?

20 And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.

21 [n]The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but [o]woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22 ¶ [p]And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 ¶ [q]And when they had sung a [4]hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

27 [r]And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, [s]I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But [t]after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 [u]But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But [x]he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 [y]And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

k Prov. 16. 1.—*l* Matt. 26. 20, &c.—*m* Psa. 41. 9; 55. 13, 14; John 6. 70; 13. 10, 11.—*n* Matt. 26. 24; Luke 22. 22.—*o* Acts 1. 25.—*p* Matt. 26. 26; Luke 22. 19; 1 Cor. 11. 23.—*q* Matt. 26. 30.

4 Or. *psalm*.—*r* Matt. 26. 31.—*s* Zech. 13. 7.
t Chap. 16. 7.—*u* Matt. 26. 33, 34; Luke 22. 33, 34; John 13. 37, 38.—*x* 2 Kin. 8. 13; Jer. 10. 23; 17. 9.
y Matt. 26. 36; Luke 22. 39; John 18. 1.

§ 121.—Preparation for the Passover, 12–16. (See notes on Matt. xxvi, 17–19.)

§ 122, 124.—Supper and Indication of Betrayal, 17–21. (See notes on Matt. xxvi, 20–25.)

§ 126, 128.—Institution of the Lord's Supper, 22–25. (See notes on Matt. xxvi, 26–29.)

§ 131.—Sufferings in Gethsemane, 26, 32–42. (See notes on Matt xxvi, 36–46.)

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto them, [z] My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, [a] Abba, Father, [b] all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: [c] nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest thou not watch one hour?

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. [d] The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak.

39 And again he went away, and [e] prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither [f] wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, [g] the hour is come: behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 [h] Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

43 ¶ [i] And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, [k] Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, Master, and kissed him.

46 ¶ And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 [l] And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves to take me?

z John 12. 27.——*a* Romans 8. 13; Galatians 4. 6.——*b* Hebrews 5. 7.——*c* John 5. 30; 6. 38.——*d* Romans 7. 23; Galatians 5. 17.——*e* 2 Corinthians 12. 8.——*f* Romans 3. 19.

g John 13. 1.——*h* Matthew 26. 46; John 18. 1.——*i* Matthew 26. 47; Luke 22. 47; John 18. 3.——*k* 2 Samuel 20. 9, 10; Psalm 55. 20, 21; Proverbs 27. 6.——*l* Matthew 26. 55; Luke 22. 52.

33. *Sore amazed*—An expression, as it were, of horror at some strange revelation of depths of evil unexpected and hitherto unconceived to his soul. Was his amazement awakened by awful views of the terribleness of sin and the depths of the hell which are its consequences?

36. *Abba, Father*—The word *Abba* signifies *father* in the Syriac, which was the dialect that our Saviour spoke. In that section of country where both Hebrew and Greek were spoken by the people, it was sometimes customary to give both the Hebrew and the Greek words, one to explain the other. Similar was the custom of bestowing upon the same individual both a Hebrew and Greek name.

49 I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not: but [m] the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

50 [n] And they all forsook him, and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body;* and the young men laid hold on him:

52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

53 ¶ [o] And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55 [p] And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; [q] and found none.

56 For many bare [r] false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

m Psa. 22. 6; Isa. 53. 7. &c.; Luke 22. 37; 24. 44. *n* Psalm 88. 8; verse 27.

o Matt. 26. 57; Luke 22. 54; John 18. 13.—*p* Matt. 26. 59.—*q* 1 Pet. 3. 16. 18.—*r* Psa. 27. 12.

§ 132.—APPREHENSION OF JESUS. 43–52. (See notes on Matt. xxvi, 47–57.)

51. *Followed him a certain young man*—The incident of this young man occurs very briefly, and is narrated apparently for no purpose whatever. The only solution, certainly the best, is the supposition that it was no other than Mark himself. Mark was at this time a young man, living probably in Jerusalem with his mother; was more or less a follower of Jesus, and very likely to be present, from his interest in our Lord, during these awful transactions. That he should not name himself is very naturally explained, on the same principle of personal delicacy as induced the evangelist John to allude to himself in the third person. As John naturally styles himself the *disciple whom Jesus loved*, so Mark could as naturally style himself *a certain young man.* Very likely the Christians of that day knew who the certain young man was. *There followed him*—From this clause it is plain, that the supposition of some commentators, that this was an indifferent young man, accidentally awakened by the tumult, is untenable. He is a *follower;* and he does not follow *them*, that is, the crowd, but *him.* Jesus is the object of his interest. It must, therefore, have been some friend of Jesus, pressing after him to ascertain what was to be his fate. *A linen cloth*—A wrapper thrown over his undressed body. Doubtless this was the aba, an outer cloth thrown over the dress, and used even in sleep to enwrap the body. See on Matt. v, 40. *The young men*—The young men who formed a part of the company who apprehended Jesus. This use of the word to signify soldiers is common, both in Greek and Latin.

52. *Left the linen cloth*—As they grasp the cloth to apprehend him, he let go the cloth and escaped. *Naked*—It may be that the aba was his only article of dress. Dr. Thomson (vol. i, p. 500) speaks of the very poor who sleep in their aba, or outer garment, and have no other "raiment for their skin." But the word rendered here *naked* often signifies undressed, that is, clad in the under-garments alone. At any rate, it is clear, not only from his following Jesus, but also from their attempt to apprehend him, that he was not only a friend, but a known friend of the Saviour. It is, therefore, almost a demonstration that Mark here narrates how nearly he himself came to being apprehended with Jesus.

§ 133.—JESUS BEFORE ANNAS AND CAIAPHAS, 53–72. (See notes on Matt. xxvi, 57–75.)

56. *Agreed not together*—The original

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, [s]I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 [t]And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

61 But [u]he held his peace, and answered nothing. [x]Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am; [y]and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent [z]his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all [a]condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 ¶ [b]And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

s Chap. 15. 29; John 2. 19.—*t* Matt. 26. 62. *u* Isa. 53. 7.—*x* Matt. 26. 63.—*y* Matt. 24. 30; 26. 64; Luke 22. 69.—*z* Isaiah 36. 22; 37. 1; Jeremiah 36. 23. 24; Acts 14. 13. 14.—*a* 1 Kings 21. 9, 13; John 5. 18; 8. 58, 59; 10. 31. 33; 19. 7. *b* Matt. 26. 69; Luke 22. 55; John 18. 16.

Greek is by many understood to mean that the witness or testimony was not *adequate*, that is, sufficient to make out a criminal case. As the variations between the testimonies do not seem to be essential, this is probably the true meaning.

61. *The Christ*—See note on Matt. i, 1.

62. *And Jesus said, I am*—Seldom in the course of his ministry did our Lord announce himself as the Messiah. But here, in the great and trying moment, when questioned by the Jewish nation, in the person of their high priest, solemnly, *Are you the* MESSIAH? to the Jewish nation he returns the solemn reply, *I am.*

64. *Guilty of death*—The phrase *guilty of*, is here used in the old English sense, deserving of death.

65. *Say unto him, Prophesy*—Mr. Blount, in his work designed to prove the truth of the Gospels by their undesigned coincidences, remarks, that Matthew mentions this challenge to prophesy, and adds, that it was a challenge to prophesy, *Who smote thee?* How it required the power of prophecy in Jesus to tell who smote him, Matthew does not explain, nor, had we his Gospel alone, should we be able to tell. But Mark in this verse supplies the fact that they *covered his face*, then smote him, and then, in ridicule of his title as prophet, bade him prophesy which was his smiter. On the other hand, we may add that Mark omits to tell what was the prophecy demanded, so it is by a double tally that the two evangelists supplement each other.

69 [c]And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70 And he denied it again. [d]And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: [e]for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 [f]And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And [5]when he thought thereon, he wept.

CHAPTER XV.

AND [a]straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.

c Matt. 26. 71; Luke 22. 58; John 18. 25. d Matthew 26. 73; Luke 22. 59; John 18. 26. e Acts 2. 7.—f Matthew 26. 75.—5 Or, *he wept abundantly*, or, *he began to weep*.

PETER'S DENIAL OF CHRIST, 66–72.

70. *A Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto*—The broad Galilean brogue was the jest of the more refined speakers of Jerusalem. As many of the Hebrew words resemble each other, with but a slight difference, a Galilean would frequently by his provincial mispronunciation produce an unintended meaning. Many anecdotes are in the Rabbins of these double meanings, as amusing as occur in English of the wrong use or disuse of the initial H.

CHAPTER XV.

For explanation of this chapter, we refer generally to the notes on Matt. xxvii.

2 [b]And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest *it*.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things; but he answered nothing.

4 [c]And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 [d]But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now [e]at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude crying aloud began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, [f]Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

a Psa. 2. 2; Matt. 27. 1; Luke 22. 66; 23. 1; John 18. 28; Acts 3. 13; 4. 26.—b Matt. 27. 11.—c Matt. 27. 13.—d Isa. 53. 7; John 19. 9.—e Matt. 27. 15; Luke 23. 17; John 18. 39.—f Acts 3. 13. 15.

6. *He released unto them one prisoner*—John says it was a custom. No traces of this custom appear in history, classical or Jewish. It may have been first adopted as a custom by Pilate himself, to ingratiate himself with the people. But the custom had become so fixed that, though not established by law, it is styled by Luke a necessity.

7. *Barabbas*—Styled by Matthew a robber, who was guilty of sedition and slaughter. In many ancient copies he is called Jesus also; and Pilate's question reads, "Whom will ye that I deliver unto you, Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus called Christ?" The reading, though adopted by some scholars, is not well sustained

10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him [g]for envy.

11 But [h]the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, [1]Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 ¶ [j]And *so* Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.

16 [k]And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band.

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his *head*,

18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they [1]smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing *their* knees worshipped him.

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 [m]And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country,

g 1 Sam. 18. 8, 9; Prov. 27. 4; Isa. 3. 14, 16. *h* Matt. 27. 20; Acts 3. 14.—*i* Heb. 7. 26; 1 Pet. 1. 19.—*j* Matt. 27. 26; John 19. 1, 16.

k Matt. 27. 27.—*l* Job 30. 9, 11; Psa. 35. 15, 16; Isaiah 50. 6; Micah 5. 1; Hebrews 12. 2, 3. *m* Matthew 27. 32; Luke 23. 26.

13. *Crucify him*—The cross, as we have remarked in Matthew, was in the form of a †, corresponding to the human form with the arms spread. It was early adopted by the Romans and other nations as a means of inflicting torture and death upon the human body. It was among the striking occurrences of this great transaction, that this mode of death extended him upon a representation of a human form, and presents him to our view with his outspread arms as if to embrace the human race.

16. *Pretorium*—The word Pretorium is derived from the Latin word Pretor, signifying *leader*, a word applied to very different officers—civil, judicial, and military—in different periods of Roman history. The Pretorium signified the place of the Pretor, and in military service it was the general's tent. But in this present passage it seems to refer to the court, or part of the tower of Antonia, where the Procurator's guard were stationed.

21. *Simon a Cyrenian*—Cyrene was a distinguished city in northern Africa, in which, though consisting mostly of Greeks, a Jewish colony was located. Having much intercourse with Jerusalem, they maintained a regular synagogue at that city. Simon appears at this time to have been a resident, at any rate temporarily, either of Jerusalem or its adjacent country, inasmuch as it is from the country he is coming when he is so sadly met by the procession of our Lord's executioners. Very probably he was known to be a favourer of Jesus, and for that reason was pressed into this cruel service. This probability is corroborated by the facts which we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, that a number of the early converts to Christianity were members of the Cyrenian synagogue. (Compare Acts ii, 10; vi, 9; xi, 19, 20.) Mark says that he was father of Alexander and Rufus, names which appear to be favourably familiar to his Christian readers. Im-

the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 [n]And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 [o]And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not.

24 And when they had crucified him, [p]they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And [q]it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

26 And [r]the superscription of his accusation was written over, [s]THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27 And [t]with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, [u]And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29 And [v]they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, [x]thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And [y]they that were crucified with him reviled him.

33 And [z]when the sixth hour was come, [a]there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, [b]Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, [c]he calleth Elias.

36 And [d]one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and [e]gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 [f]And Jesus cried with a

n Matthew 27. 33; Luke 23. 33; John 19. 17. *o* Matt. 27. 34.—*p* Psa. 22. 18; Luke 23. 34; John 19. 23.—*q* See Matt. 27. 45; Luke 23. 44; John 19. 14.—*r* Matthew 27. 37; John 19. 19. *s* Psalm 2. 6; Zechariah 9. 9; Matthew 2. 2. *t* Matthew 27. 38.—*u* Isaiah 53. 12; Luke 22. 37.

v Psa. 22. 7.—*x* Chap. 14. 58; John 2. 19.—*y* Matt. 27. 44; Luke 23. 39.—*z* Matt. 27. 45; Luke 23. 44. *a* Amos 8. 9, 10.—*b* Psa. 22. 1; Matt. 27. 46 *c* Matt. 17. 11, 13; 27. 47, 49.—*d* Matt. 27. 48; John 19. 29.—*e* Psa. 69. 21.—*f* Matt. 27. 50; Luke 23. 46; John 19. 30.

pressive to their hearts must have been the thought that their own father had borne the Saviour's cross. If the tradition be true, that Mark wrote his Gospel at Rome, it is highly probable that the Rufus mentioned in Rom. xvi, 13 was one of the sons here named. *Bear his cross*—Probably the Saviour had fainted under the burden of the cross, and Simon was made to bear it entirely in his room or to share a part of its weight. Indeed, when we consider how large and heavy the beam of a cross must be to support at a height the body of a man, it seems impossible that the entire cross could have here been borne. Some have thought, with apparent truth, that it was but the cross-beam that was carried through the streets, as the indication and the token of shame.

loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And [g] the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

39 ¶ And [h] when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 [i] There were also women looking on [k] afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;

41 Who also, when he was in Galilee, [l] followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

42 ¶ [m] And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also [n] waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and *calling unto* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 [o] And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, [p] and laid him in a sepulchre which was [q] hewn out of a rock, and [r] rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of Joses beheld where he was laid.

CHAPTER XVI.

AND [a] when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, [b] had bought sweet

g Matt. 27. 51; Luke 23. 45.——*h* Matt. 27. 54; Luke 23. 47.——*i* Matthew 27. 55; Luke 23. 49. *k* Psa. 38. 11.——*l* Luke 8. 2, 3.——*m* Matt. 27. 57; Luke 23. 50; John 19. 38.——*n* Luke 2. 25, 38.

o Matthew 27. 59; Luke 23. 53; John 19. 40. *p* Isaiah 53. 9.——*q* Isaiah 22. 16.——*r* Chap. 16. 3, 4. *a* Matthew 28. 1, &c.; Luke 24. 1, &c.; John 20. 1. *b* Luke 23. 56.

43. *Joseph of Arimathea... craved the body of Jesus*—The cruelty of Roman law allowed the malefactor to hang until putrefaction had dissolved his body, or the beasts and birds had torn it in pieces. But the humaner law of Moses directed that the malefactor hanged on a tree should be taken down before nightfall. Roman policy usually yielded to such peculiarities in their conquered provinces. Accordingly the crucified bodies are taken down, and the process of death is hastened, or at least the impossibility of escape ensured, in the case of the thieves, by breaking their legs. But the special divine provision in order to secure the fulfilment of the prophetic type of the paschal victim, of which *not a bone was to be broken*, the earlier death of Jesus, prevented the execution of the same violence upon his body. When thus taken down and found fully deceased, the moment arrived when it should be rescued from desecration by the interposition of Joseph. Otherwise he would have been consigned forthwith to the shameful burial of ordinary malefactors.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *And Salome*—Besides the three women here mentioned, Luke mentions a fourth, Joanna, the wife of Chusa, adding that there were others, of women from Galilee. It was, therefore, a

spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 [c] And very early in the morning, the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 [d] And entering into the se-

c Luke 24. 1; John 20. 1.

d Luke 24. 3; John 20. 11, 12.

numerous party. *Sweet spices*—Consisting of myrrh, aloes, and other preventives of putrefaction, and odorous perfumes. These spices had been prepared upon the previous Friday evening. Previous to this, the sacred body had been embalmed by Nicodemus with spices to the enormous amount of a hundred pounds in weight, inclosed within the linen cloth that enwrapped him. Why was this exceeding copious amount of spices lavished upon the Lord's body? The ancient Egyptians adopted the practice of embalmment with the idea of preserving the body undissolved and unmarred for the day of resurrection. Did these friends of Jesus provide these ample preservatives under a somewhat similar conception? As Mary unknowingly anointed his body for his burial, so these disciples seemed half unconsciously to be embalming him for his resurrection. It is almost impossible to suppose that some thought of his prediction of his rising again should not cross their minds, and it seems naturally to have shown itself in this munificent honouring of the sacred body.

2. *First day of the week*—Sunday. Hence this day of the week was called the Lord's day by St. John in Rev. i, 9. It is therefore recognized by inspiration as the sacred day in the Christian week. The day of the Saviour's sepulchral repose was the last of Jewish Sabbaths. The first day of the week has from that time to this succeeded to the honours of the fourth commandment. Six days still shalt thou labour, but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. The first day of the old week is the decalogue's seventh of the new. *At the rising of the sun*—See note on Matt. xxviii, 1.

4. *For it was very great*—This clause seems to render a reason for the query of the women, and would, therefore, be naturally appended to the preceding verse.

5. *Entering into the sepulchre*—The sepulchres of the ancient Jews were often hewn in the solid rock, and consisted usually of two or more apartments. Entering its front door, you find its first and largest apartment to be a room several feet square. From this a low door opens into another apartment, into which you descend by a flight of steps. This is the sepulchre, or place where the corpse is deposited, either in cells cut into the wall, extending lengthwise to the distance of six or seven feet, or shelves cut parallel to the room, so that the entire length of the corpse would be visible. It is probable that the sepulchre in which our Lord was deposited was of this latter kind, for the two angels seen by Mary Magdalene stood one at the head and the other at the foot, where the body of Jesus had lain. John xx, 12. We may suppose then that the women entered the first apartment (sometimes called the *court*) and saw the young man at the right hand, near or within the sepulchre, at which place he could easily invite them to see where the Lord had lain. Whether the whole train of women entered or not is not certain, but probably Mary, Salome, and Joanna did enter the first apartment. Nor is it certain whether any of them complied with the invitation to enter the sepulchre to see the shelf on which the sacred body had been deposited.

pulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 [e]And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, [f]as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: [g]neither said they any thing to any *man;* for they were afraid.

9 ¶ Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week, [h]he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, [i]out of whom he had cast seven devils.

e Matt. 28. 5, 6, 7.—*f* Matt. 26. 32; chapter 14. 28.

g See Matthew 28. 8; Luke 24. 9.
h John 20. 14.—*i* Luke 8. 2.

Young man—A man in form but an angel in nature. It would seem that angelic beings can assume different forms, and invest themselves with apparent habiliments, and present or withdraw themselves from sight as they please. So our Lord in his resurrection body could make himself more or less known, as he chose, to his disciples. And this answers the very foolish question which some have asked: Whence did Jesus procure his resurrection garments? *Sitting on the right side*—At their right hand as they entered the inner chamber.

7. *And Peter*—The Greek word for *and* is by critics interpreted to be equivalent to *and especially.* Peter is especially mentioned here, as some suppose, because he was the most eminent of the apostles; and others, because of his late denial of his Lord. According to the former view it was a token of respect; according to the latter, of compassion and restoration to favour. Both views may be combined. Without assigning to Peter any official primacy, he was pre-eminent in character. And as he had pre-eminently fallen, so now he is pre-eminently remembered and named by the angel of the Lord.

8. *Fled from the sepulchre*—We may suppose that most probably the women did glance at the spot vacated by the risen Lord. The vacuity and the consciousness of an angel's presence filled them with awe. In Oriental manner they bowed to the earth; they escaped from the sepulchre as men flee from a supernatural apparition. *Neither said they anything to any man*—That is, on their way they addressed no bystander, but hastened to fulfil the message of the angel to the disciples.

9. *Appeared first to Mary Magdalene*—A close comparison of John and Luke will perhaps show that our Lord could hardly have been seen *first* of all by Mary Magdalene. For as these women hasted from the sepulchre, Luke informs us that they were met by the risen Saviour before they arrived at the residence of the disciples. But before Mary saw the Saviour, she had gone to the residence of Peter and John, followed them to the tomb, was left there by them, and conversed with the angels before she saw the Lord. A comparison of the time of Jesus being seen by the women and by Mary Magdalene will show a strong improbability that the last occurred first. But perhaps the word *first* here is to be taken not absolutely, but relatively, as the following considerations may show.

In the entire remainder of the chapter Mark gives three appearances of our Saviour, which illustrate the matter of the *unbelief* which his resurrection had to overcome in the minds of the apostles. *First* of all, to Mary Magdalene, whose narrative was discredited; "after

10 [k] *And* she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 [l] And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 ¶ After that he appeared in another form [m] unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

k Luke 24. 10; John 20. 18.

l Luke 24. 11.—*m* Luke 24. 13.

that" to the two from Emmaus, whose account was also disbelieved; and "afterward" (or rather *finally*, ὕστερον, ver. 14) to the whole *eleven*, whom he "upbraided with their unbelief."

The word *first* then in this verse by no means implies that the Lord's absolutely *first* appearance at all was to Mary Magdalene; but the *first* of this class of three cases. No more does the ὕστερον, or *finally*, of verse 14 imply that it narrates our Lord's *last* appearance on earth. Both terms may indicate the *first* and *last* of the *three* instances. Our Lord, therefore, may really have appeared to the company of women earlier than to Mary Magdalene. See note on Matt. xxviii, 7.

But the counter view of Milman seems to me perfectly satisfactory. Peter and John alone of the apostles had followed Jesus to the cross, and were probably staying not far from the sepulchre. So near were they that they ran the distance in a race. The other disciples had fled, had scattered, were very likely to be at Bethany, (the place of Christ's seclusion during the nights of Passion Week,) and the appearance of Jesus to these women may have been on Mount Olivet, or somewhere else, long after the interview with Mary of Magdala *first*.

10. *Them that had been with him*—Namely, his apostles whom he had chosen to be with him, who for near three years had been his constant followers. *As they mourned and wept*—As they were mourning and weeping the loss of their beloved Master, and the overthrow of their dearest prospects. In the catastrophe of the crucifixion, their courage and fortitude had been lost. Recollections they no doubt had of his predictions of his resurrection; but their minds are incapable now of rising to the high level of so stupendous a supernatural fact. This seems, indeed, strange. But the same thing is occurring every day to ourselves. We weep and mourn hardly the less for our friends just deceased, from the fact that they are still living in soul and will rise in body at the last day. Sense so overcomes faith that we are overwhelmed with sorrow for the sad lot of those whom we fully believe to have gone to a better world. See notes on Mark ix, 10, 32.

11. *Believed not*—They had not forgotten, nor did they truly disbelieve their Lord's predictions. But in their dejection of mind they had lost the realizing power and could not grasp the fact. Besides, if our Lord is to rise again he ought to come in the glory of his kingdom, appearing perhaps in the skies. Mark ix, 10–31. Hence they afterward ask our Lord, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts i, 6. It is quite unexpected, therefore, that his resurrection shall steal upon them, and be first announced to them by women. Nor, had the resurrection been a fable invented by these apostles, would they have made themselves so little the heroes of the history.

12. *After that*—Mark here selects a second appearance of Jesus, which is more fully described in Luke xxiv, 13 The place in the country was Emmaus, some eight miles from Jerusalem. Dr Thomson identifies Emmaus with the present Kuriet el'Aineb, situated on the road to Jaffa on the dividing ridge between plain and mountains. By that power of appearing at will under various forms to human senses, which we have above described as belonging to supernatural beings, our Lord at first conceals himself from their knowledge, but finally resumes his well known appearance to their vision.

13 And they went and told *it* unto the residue: [n]neither believed they them.

14 ¶ [o]Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat [1]at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 [p]And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, [q]and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 [r]He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;

n Luke 16. 31 John 20. 8. 25.—*o* Luke 24. 36; John 20. 19; 1 Cor. 15. 5.—1 Or, *together*.

p Matt. 28. 19; John 15. 16.—*q* Col. 1. 23.—*r* John 3. 18. 36; Acts 2. 38; 16. 30; Rom. 10. 9; 1 Pet. 3. 21.

13. *They*—The two disciples from Emmaus. *The residue*—The rest of their fellow apostles. *Neither believed they them*—There was perhaps a reasonableness in this distrust of particular relations of our Lord's appearances. A due skepticism of any particular story was doubtless right. It did not imply necessarily a disbelief that the Lord would rise again according to his promises. In fact, like true philosophers, the disciples held that no narrative of the kind should be accepted until it had been fully tested by the most satisfactory evidence. Hence their skepticism affords just ground for our belief. Their testimony is the testimony of incredulous and scrutinizing witnesses.

14. *Afterward*—Mark gives here a third appearance. *Appeared unto the eleven*—They are called the eleven because this was now their official number, and not because there were really eleven present, for Thomas was absent on that occasion. This was probably the same as the appearance mentioned by Paul in 1 Cor. xv, 5, where they are called the *twelve*. This same meeting is described in John xx, 19–23, but most fully in Luke xxiv, 36–49; upon that occasion our Lord saluted them with peace, presented his members to their senses, and ate in their presence, to show that he was no spirit. And he opened their eyes to understand the prophetic Scriptures, that they might appreciate their predictions of his death and resurrection, and the universal propagation of his Gospel. He promised to commission them as universal preachers of his word, but bade them remain in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high.

15. *Go ye into all the world*—These words somewhat resemble the great commission given in Matt. xxviii, 16–20, on the mountain in Galilee, but they were now uttered on a different occasion, namely, as they sat at meat. As these words were addressed to all preachers of the word, who are therein successors to the apostles, so they make it the duty of the Church to prosecute the enterprise of converting the world. Nations nominally Christian are to be converted to a real piety. Heathen nations are to be converted to the acceptance of a vital Christianity. The words sound as a trumpet blast pealing through all ages to the army of faith to win the world to the Saviour. *Preach*—The preacher and the preaching are divine institutions. They are established by Christ, and shall last till the world shall end. All other moral means of converting the world to righteousness—the press, the sabbath school, the voluntary societies, social prayer meetings, class meetings, and other meetings for Christian counsel—are auxiliary to the preacher and the preaching of the word. *The Gospel*—That is, the "good news." (See note on Matt. i, 1.) Preach the good news that there is a Saviour who can save us from sin, death, and hell, and endow us with holiness, blessedness, and heaven. Preach the good news, that all who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and desire to turn from sin to piety, may find the way. *Every creature*—That has a soul to be saved.

16. *He that believeth*—Accepts the good news as the ground of his action. *And is baptized*—Baptized in the true spirit of the ordinance. For the external baptism by water is a public pro-

[s] but he that believeth not shall be damned.

s John 12. 48.—t Luke 10. 17;

fession that the baptism by spirit has taken place. It is a professional outward consecration indicating an inward consecration of soul and body to the blessed Trinity. It is an emblematical regeneration figuring a real and spiritual regeneration. It is a figurative washing away of the sin, correspondent to the real washing away of sin. It is an external entering into the kingdom of heaven, correspondent to the real entering by regeneration into the spiritual kingdom of heaven. It is the being born of water, figuring the being born of spirit. Hence he who believes and is baptized really and truly shall be saved. *Saved*—The condition of perseverance in belief and consecration is of course implied in order to salvation. To believe once secures not our salvation, any more than to disbelieve once will secure our damnation. *Saved* from all those evils which the true man, who would do his duty to himself and to his God, desires to escape. Hence, as Christianity brings ample evidence of affording such a salvation, every true man who desires holiness, and earnestly wishes to escape from sin and its consequences, will accept Christianity. The Gospel, therefore, presents itself as an alternative, and a test of conduct, character, and destiny. Affinity for it will produce belief in it and faith upon it. It is an infallible test. It tests and discriminates rightly. All who ought to be saved believe it, and all who believe it ought to be saved. Hence we see the folly of those cavillers who object that it is unreasonable for Christianity to make belief a condition of salvation. *Shall be damned*—To reject Christianity is to reject the method of becoming right, of attaining to ultimate purity, holiness, and heaven. Hence those who reject it are left to sin. They are left to be punished for all their sins. And they are pre-eminently punishable for that one great sin, the rejection of the way of holiness through the Redeemer.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; [t] In my

Acts 5. 16; 8. 7; 16. 18; 19. 12.

Those who object that it is wrong to punish men for believing that they ought to reject Christ, might perhaps as well object to punishing a thief who believed it best for him to steal, or a murderer who in his malignity believed that it is best for him to assassinate his victim. The wrong belief in all these cases arises from the wilful indulgence of a wrongful heart. *Damned*—Condemned, in opposition to being *saved*. If salvation means deliverance from sin, guilt, and hell, damnation means surrendry to sin, guilt, and hell. Whatever is the curse of the law, that Jesus *saves* from on our faith. Whatever is the curse of the law, to that damnation consigns us upon our disbelief. If the curse of the law be, as some think, temporary, and coming to an end, then he who suffers it to the end is not saved by Christ. If, therefore, damnation terminate by its own limitation, and any shall become happy after suffering it to the end, they become happy without salvation and without redemption. Theirs is a final heaven in which no glory is offered to Christ for his redemption or to God for his grace. Of such a heaven holy Scripture knows nothing.

17. *Follow them that believe*—This promise is general, but not universal. It does not affirm that all in all ages who believe shall be followed by these signs. In fact, if each sign is once, twice, or thrice fulfilled in the case of any who believe, it is completely fulfilled. All over that is surplus fulfilment. So that those are very foolish who cavil that, according to this text, all believers must perform signs, and that none that work not miracles can be true believers.

The signs here mentioned do not include the raising of the dead. That great miracle, by which the soul is recalled from its departed state, has scarce ever been unequivocally and completely performed since the resurrection of our Lord.

name shall they cast out devils; [a] they shall speak with new tongues;

18 [x] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; [y] they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 ¶ So then, [z] after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was [a] received up into heaven, and [b] sat on the right hand of God.

u Acts 2. 4; 10. 46; 19. 6; 1 Cor. 12. 10, 28. *v* Luke 10. 19; Acts 28. 5.——*y* Acts 5. 15, 16; 9. 17; 28. 8; James 5. 14, 15.——*z* Acts 1. 2, 9. *a* Luke 24. 51——*b* Psalm 110. 1; Acts 7. 55.

In my name...cast out devils—As Jesus cast out devils in his own original power, so the apostles must perform the same miracles in his, and not in their own name. Their first miracle should be that signal work which typified the great work of Christ in expelling evil and its author from the soul of man, and from the world, namely, the casting out of devils. This phenomenon of possession existed through the apostolic age; and the fathers of the early Church bear ample testimony that the true believer expelled demons through faith in Jesus's name. *Speak with new tongues*—Tongues by them not hitherto possessed. Here is an intimation of the Pentecostal miracle. This miracle remained with the early Church (1 Cor. xii, 10) as a symbol of the power of Christianity to pervade all the tribes and languages of the babbling earth, and as a means of arresting the attention of the unchristian and unheeding world.

18. *They shall take up serpents*—All the miracles here specified, and more, were doubtless plentifully performed in the early Christian Church; but the scantiness of the historical record furnishes no narratives of some of them. Of the present miracle of taking up serpents but a single instance remains on record, namely, in Acts xxviii, 56. *Drink any deadly thing*—There is a legend that this miracle occurred to the apostle John, but it is not sufficiently authentic. *Hands on the sick...recover*—Instances are alluded to in Acts iii, 6, and v, 15, and James v, 14.

As bodily ills are the shadow of the ills of the soul, so these miracles of external mercy are images of the spiritual and moral miracles that Christianity ever works. In all ages the regenerating Spirit *casts out devilish passions* from men's souls. The young convert to the Gospel speaks with a *new language*. The powerful grace of God enables the faithful Christian to handle unharmed the evil things of this life, and perform its secular business, which bite other men and kill them. The *cup* of temptation and trial which poisons the soul of the unregenerate is drained by the faithful truster in Christ unhurt. And from all the ailments of which men sicken and die, the power of the resurrection shall completely heal them.

19. *He was received up into heaven*—Of this ascension the fullest account of all the Gospels is given in Luke xxiv, 50–52. And as if the ascension belonged less to the Gospel narrative than to the growth of the kingdom of God after that narrative closes, the fullest picture of all is given in Acts i, 2-11.

The scene took place (not in Galilee, but) on the Mount of Olives, near the verge of Bethany. Our Saviour led them to that spot, and while conversing with them, he lifted up his hand and blessed them. And as he blessed them he began to ascend. And as he ascended, the cloud gathering beneath his feet at once bore him upward and closed him from their sight.

Whither did the person of Jesus ascend? Into heaven. But where is heaven? We know not its locality in the immensity of the universe. Astronomers indeed tell us that there is a centre of our solar system, and that is the sun. But the sun is a member of a larger system, which has its centre or sun. And this is member of a still grander system revolving around its centre. At last there is a centre of

20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, [c] and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

c Acts 5. 12; 14. 3; 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5; Heb. 2. 4.

the whole universe. At that centre resides the great MOVER of the whole. There doubtless is the central residence of GOD. To that centre perhaps Jesus departed. At any rate heaven is *away* from this earth, and away from this earth is up. Wherever heaven is therefore it is *up*. The language of Scripture, the language of humanity, the language of our childhood, herein is true, and strictly in accordance with the highest science.

20. *Went forth, and preached*—They no longer sat and *mourned and wept.* (Ver. 10.) They rose like heroes and quitted themselves like men. They were afraid of no danger, and braved all deaths. Such was the Pentecostal power with which they were endued from on high. *The Lord working*—Through them as his instruments. *With signs following*—All the promises of signs were lavishly fulfilled. The apostles' faith was made mighty by the signs that attended them, and the Gospel prevailed by these powerful testimonies from God. And how mighty was the spirit of this young Christianity!

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